4
「E-----ン異世界道中 2巻」 (C) アルファポリス／あずみ圭
Tsuki ga Ichibiku
Isekai Douchuu
Second Tome – Chance Meeting in Rotsgard Arc

Tsuki ga Michibiku Isekai Douchuu

Second Tome - Chance Meeting in Rotsgard Arc

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Chapter 66: Looking At The Departing Back

“So it has been carried out. It’s been a while since we had such a busy day”

A man in the prime of his life has his hand on his prided beard and looking at a certain direction on top of a castle wall’s pathway.

This place is Tsige’s northeast department. In this land that is practically surrounded by high castle walls, only the northeast department is different.

From the northeast exit there is a wide beautifully paved path that extends forth.

The wall that protects the city is just as it is, it stretches out on both sides of these big path. That length goes on onto the horizon and one couldn’t see its end.

It is called the Golden Highway. It is the safest and highest priced path in this world. The width reaches 10 meters, but it is protected by a high wall. The highway goes from the southern tip to Tsige, from the northern extremity to the empire’s trading city, Robin City. Each nation maintains and improves it.

The lands that can use this highway to go in and out, without exception, are protected by a tall wall. There are even cities that were created in turn of this path and have evolved from it.

So that the merchants could transport large amounts of goods safely, so that important people can move safely

from countries, for the sake of passing on important information that can't be told through thought transmission as fast as possible; for various purposes, these highway is utilized.

Because the cost to use is pretty high, there are practically no pedestrians or adventurers in sight. Even if there are, it would be to protect people that are looking for even more safety than it is already provided.

Also, in various towns that work as relay points, magic formations are set, so it is made in the form that you are able to transfer one after the other in the different towns that are connected to the highway.

Raidou, who has left Tsige today, didn't walk through the highway. He used the numerous magic formations to head to the far away Academy Town. But even from those relay points, the arrival to their destination will take long. In the direction that the prime man and the man who has his whole body clad in black look, there is no doubt that "he" is there.

"You are totally right. Even if they transit without resting, for them to reach Academy Town would take up to 3 days"

"Yeah. But wouldn't it have been fine to at least have Lisa and the girls see him off? Even if their hair is a bit short, I don't think Raidou-dono would mind"

"Women have their women way of thinking"

"Fumu, so it's such a thing. And so, Morris…"

The man tries to change the topic from the male butler.

His eyes were not those of someone seeing off an acquaintance, nor the eyes of a father thinking about his family.

“What is it?” (Morris)

The man called Morris must have noticed, he responds to his master somewhat stiffly.

“Tomoe-dono and Mio-dono. From your eyes, how do they look like to you?”

“In terms of physical strength, no matter which one, I would have to raise my hands in defeat. In terms of doing trades, Mio-sama would be more comfortable, but in the end, she can’t do anything that doesn’t leave a bad after taste. I think that they are ladies that match their level”

“… So that’s how it is huh. Well, the words “I know my own position as a person being lent a spot” that Tomoe said… I have no other choice but to believe in them. What about the people from Kuzunoha Company stationed at our store?”

“I have talked to them a number of times and from what I could get, the dwarfs are craftsmen. The other ones that I saw with Tomoe-sama once, from what I could see, they seemed hyuman but they had brown skin and red eyes so I think they are demi-humans. They have decorum, so it didn’t look like people who would cause trouble” (Morris)

“Does Raidou-dono not have intentions on employing hyumans?”

Rembrandt tilts his head. The followers that he has,

Tomoe and Mio, are hyuman, but the other ones are all demi-humans. Taking into account their characteristics, most of them seemed to have appearances close to hyumans, but there is no hyuman employed.

“For now it seems to only be Tomoe-sama and Mio-sama. He knows various demi-human languages, so he may be taking into account the cost and ability as a priority when he is choosing. This is just an impression I got when I was talking to them but, I felt like they hated the so called discrimination” (Morris)

“Ability… and cost huh. This place is certainly dangerous, but Tsige has a principle of accepting people with ability after all. If we think like so, it is not that strange. If it were me, I wouldn’t care if they were demi-humans or whatever as long as they are proficient. Or at least that’s how I think now” (Rembrandt)

“… In time, an undesirable war might occur between the hyumans and the demi-humans but… a trend like that does exist” (Morris)

With a voice that one could feel slight grief from, Morris affirms his master’s words. If the demi-humans’ position goes up too much, it might create friction between the hyumans. He was worried about that.

“At least the Kuzunoha Company won’t become an explosive agent for now. Theyare still in a state where they don’t even have their own store. They won’t do anything rash. If it looks like a seed will appear, we just need to talk with Tomoe-dono and the others. It’s not like those girls won’t employ any hyumans at all” (Rembrandt)

“Yeah. Most of the adventurers will suppress their voices, so currently there shouldn’t be any problems” (Morris)

Rembrandt and Morris seemed to feel certain distress over the future of Kuzunoha Company.

“Now that I think about it, I wanted to meet the other follower that Raidou-dono said he would reunite with later. By the time he returns, I hope he brings him here” (Rembrandt)

“We tried to investigate on our side, but we couldn’t get who in the world he was. We can’t get any information of Raidou-sama either. It’s to the point that it makes me wonder if they are mushrooms that sprouted after rain” (Morris)

“… Mushrooms huh” (Rembrandt)

“Yes, with the sentiments of not knowing anything about them. Mushrooms” (Morris)

“… Well, it is a personage that would bring trouble if he tried after all. It’s not like I don’t understand how you feel. I don’t mind it if that is how the investigations turned out to be. I am having you guys do something that is hopeless after all. There was an inquiry from the castle about their registration in the guild and the level of those two…” (Rembrandt)

“!!”

The words “From the castle” that Morris’s master said, made him tense. Because if the Aion Kingdom’s attention is taken, Raidou’s movements will be limited a lot.

“No problem. Right now he is not properly moving as a merchant so, if I get anything, I will report it. Is what I told them and send them back” (Rembrandt)

“Rembrandt-sama…” (Morris)

“Don’t make that face Morris. Being in this kind of remote place makes one forget slightly that this place belongs to the country. It is not like they are doing anything to protect Tsige after all. It is obvious which side I will take between the useless bugs that only look for gold and the person that saved my family” (Rembrandt)

“… Certainly. The government officials that are brought here by the country, all of them think only about bribes. This is practically an autonomous place run by merchants. It’s just… this kind of topic is…” (Morris)

“I understand. This will stay between us. If someone got us from behind, it would be no laughing matter” (Rembrandt)

Rembrandt faces Morris and makes a childish face, like the one a kid would do when he does a prank. And Morris responds with an evil face as if punishing.

“If it comes to a point where Tomoe-sama takes my back, please leave me behind” (Morris)

He may have remembered an error of some sort, Morris shows a face of discomfort.

In the past, Morris saw Tomoe in a bookstore in town and he tried to confirm her skills so he erased his presence and approached her.

The moment he stepped into the store and thought he was at her back, her figure was suddenly nowhere to be seen. It only ended up in him being hit on his left shoulder.

Morris embarrassedly reported that to Rembrandt and he bursted in laughter. Her threat was higher than Morris ever imagined, so this was advice of not making her their enemy.

Morris clearly understood the difference of strength between him and Tomoe. In the case she and Mio, who is even higher in level than her, get serious, Morris reported to Rembrandt that his last wall of defense, Morris himself, would not be able to protect him. He is an honest person.

"… When Raidou-dono returns, he will surely be stronger than before. Today when he came to ask me about the Academy, if he were to mention about the things I don't want to be publicized or about his followers, he could have controlled the conversation. In terms of his heart, I want him to stay as he has always been" (Rembrandt)

Learning various kinds of knowledge and studying, Raidou will surely increase his abilities as a merchant. His close aide Tomoe is also proficient. He predicts that his company may develop incredibly in the future.

Rembrandt felt grateful that he didn't have any intentions of joining Aion and making Tsige his headquarters. Because they could stay as good partners without minding about dividing the business area.

Also, Tomoe and Mio.

This was the first time Rembrandt had seen people of 4 digits. Those two would cause quite the pressure and mental strain just thinking about confronting them. Because they could easily blow away a town if they so wanted. <Haha oh you…>

Instigating their imperial wrath would truly make that happen. In a sense, it's scarier than taunting a dragon.

Unless you have enough courage, trying to make business with those girls would end up in one being completely swallowed by their demands.

The requests regarding the wasteland are numerous but their completion rate is bad. That should be the case and yet, since the time Tomoe and Mio arrived, the request board in the Adventurer Guild that was always increasing only, now has a tendency to decrease.

Because of their arrival, the state of Tsige has begun to slowly change.

"Was it okay to talk about the heroes? There were contents that were supposed to be secret in what you disclosed" (Morris)

"I am incredibly grateful for my wife, my daughters and Raidou-dono. They told me they want me to do as much as I can so… I don't mind this much" (Rembrandt)

"But to disclose such information so easily would make us look like we are cheap people. Please act with a bit more prudence" (Morris)

Morris warns his master on his rash act.

“It is fine. Honestly speaking, if I am able to gain their trust with something like this, I would consider it a huge profit. Raidou-dono is my benefactor and a business partner. Above all, he is a person I can’t see limits on” (Rembrandt)

“… I overstepped my line. And also, here is a follow-up report on the hero of Gritonia” (Morris)

“Hm, let’s hear it” (Rembrandt)

“Yes. He is favorably obtaining military gains for the empire. And it also seems that he is being used in “researches” by the second princess” (Morris)

In midst of the report, the word “researches” made Rembrandt’s body stiffen.

There were previous rumors that the empire did human body experiments. But after the descent of the hero they still continued, on the contrary, this is the first time he heard that even the hero himself was being included in it.

“Gritonia might be intending to use the hero as a weapon”

“That may be the case”

“… Is the hero such a submissive one? Well, an easy to drive hero is actually something the country would be grateful for”

Existences that possess strong power normally have intense ego. It makes it troublesome to control.

“I heard that he is still a boy. Limia and Gritonia are big.

Satisfying the desires of a boy and girl should be easy for them" (Morris)

"How pitiful. So they are just going to be used in the war against the demon race huh" (Rembrandt)

If they are not aware of it themselves, that would be for the better. No matter what kind of title you possess, an idiot is still an idiot huh. Rembrandt grieved.

"… Also, there were no signs of any of the heroes approaching the Academy" (Morris)

"They are the trump cards in the front lines after all. I thought about it just in case, but it seems that the Academy will not be receiving the sparks" (Rembrandt)

"Yes, the ojo-samas' preparations to return to school have already been made, so this was a matter of worry. But it appears that their heads are currently filled with the fight that is about to occur in Stella Fort" (Morris)

"Stella Fort huh. There are a number of anecdotes about that place, it seems to be a barrier that is protected by a demon general of four arms. From what I have heard, it seems that the hero of Limia will only participate by going around helping people in this capture mission. If I remember correctly… her name is Hibiki Otonashi" (Rembrandt)

Regarding Limia's hero, she is a person that goes around the neighboring countries and solves the problems concerning the demon race. There are people that say she is the splitting image of what a hero in stories should be. When Rembrandt heard those kind of rumors in the

information investigated, the time when he received the report, he heard them half in doubt and just ignored it. Because he thinks that there is no way such a holy person of virtue would exist.

For Rembrandt, the hero that is still in the empire, who is filled with greed and lust, is an existence that is easier for him to comprehend.

“Yeah, it will be a joint front with both of the heroes. I will make moves so that we can obtain as much information as we can” (Morris)

“That would help a lot. No matter if the fight in Stella ends up in a victory or a defeat, it will decide the flow of things from now on. I want to know the conclusion as precisely as possible” (Rembrandt)

“Yes. I am looking forward to a few days from now. Who knows when the ojo-samas will get a complete recovery. We need to prepare for it” (Morris)

“By the way, what about the royal palace’s report?” (Morris)

“… It’s okay, just leave it alone. At any rate, the Stella Fort battle will utilize the consensus of all 4 major powers, so they must already know by now” (Rembrandt)

“Understood. Then I will do as you say. The preparations to return to school, to think such a day like this would come. Now that I think about it, to invite Raidou-sama to the Academy was also one of the wishes the ojo-samas did” (Morris)

“… Do you think that means they are in love with

Raidou-dono?” (Rembrandt)

For a father, this made him have terrifying complex feelings. He is a benefactor, but seeing the two girls that have not been followed by any bad bugs to grow interest in a person of the opposite sex, there is no helping those feelings.

They must have remembered about him, the two, with synchronized voices, asked about his whereabouts and circumstances.

Rembrandt himself didn’t possess that much information, and he had no intentions on retaining him pointlessly.

When he said that he doesn’t know when he would leave the town because he is an adventurer, along with his wife the three of them said “Please stop him until we are able to thank him”.

The deceiving would at one point lose its effect and when he was planning on telling him, they came and pleaded Rembrandt…

To have him go to the same Academy they are going to. He thought that they were quite into it, but this is something he felt even from before, ‘isn’t this a bit too much?’

But he was originally indulgent and, on top of it, a father that dotes his family. If it’s his two daughters’ request and his wife supports it, he didn’t care about the morals and laws of this world.

He smiled and ended up consenting to it.

These were the details regarding the matriculation of Raidou into the Academy from Rembrandt's side. Even if Raidou didn't have any intentions of going to the Academy, he would have forced it somehow.

But for some reason, he himself came to say that he wanted to go to Academy Town. When he heard that he made a complete turn and said over and over again "There's no way there was a problem"

"I don't know myself. But it seems that the two of them have a no ordinary interest in him" (Morris)

"Interest huh. You are right. They didn't change their attitude even when he showed his face after all" (Rembrandt)

(The moment he took off his mask, it may be rude but… his outward appearance was ugly, no, poorly made? No, hmm… deplorable? No, that's not it. Ah that's right, it had such a strong sense of individuality that it made me lose my words) (Rembrandt)

It was on a degree that if he weren't a hyuman but a demi-human it would be in a level that wouldn't cause surprise, so Rembrandt was already used to it.

And if the words he said about having his mask off from now on are true, he will surely pass a lot of hardships. Rembrandt felt for him. The lie of him not being able to take off his mask because of a curse so that he didn't have to show his face was a bit undesirable for Raidou, but Rembrandt understood him.

Seeing their own appearance crumble because of the

curse disease may have bended their own way of viewing the outward appearance. He remembered that his two daughters had a strong inclination to physical looks. He himself didn't change his love to them at all when he saw them in that ghost-like appearance, so he does understand that feelings and appearance are not directly related.

'Let's see how the situation unfolds', is what Rembrandt decided to go with.

(If he suddenly returns with my two daughters having a swelled stomach, I will throw the army at him. At least think of it as an opposition of sorts, Raidou-dono) (Rembrandt)

"Danna-sama, I share the same sentiments as you but I think that your thoughts are somewhat accelerated" (Morris)

Fumu, as expected of their many years of fellowship. Their thoughts get through easily. Rembrandt was wondered with Morris' words. It was still unknown if it was because it was being transmitted or because it could be seen at plain sight though.

"I am happy that you feel the same way" (Rembrandt)

There are practically no occasions where he has left something to him and he has failed. He is truly a reassuring butler.

That's right, there are practically no cases where he has left something to him and he has failed.

That's why he didn't confirm with him. He was negligent.

It was a negligence that didn’t normally happen on the merchant that even has influence in Tsige.

In another day…

An error was found in the documents submitted to Rotsgard Academy. Raidou, condolences.

Chapter 67: The Two's Journey Begins In A Downpour

The two of them noticed the abnormality.

That big abnormality which made someone feel a sense of loss suddenly appeared.

It's on the third day he departed to Academy Town.

Their connection with Makoto suddenly got broken.

But there were no changes in their bodies. The pact was still in effect. Even so, there is no doubt that this is an incredibly abnormal situation.

"What is going on-ja?!"

"Waka-sama!"

Tomoe and Mio look at each other and confirm if these sensation was shared by both of them. It seems that both of them are in the same state, is what they could tell.

In a relatively thin highway a few ways from Tsige. There was a group that was aiming straight in the sea's direction and casually travelling. They just departed so they were still not that far away from town.

At the same time that they measure the distance to the port city, they create as many mist relay points as possible. Walking along the paths, gathering information on the villages and the geographical information, they create an accurate map of the vicinity. They have an objective of sorts, but these two have a tendency to

sightsee.

However, for the forest ogres, who were dispersed in various directions around the girls, this is a serious mission. They purposely walk in an area without a road and while concentrating in gathering all the information they can on the surroundings, they follow Tomoe and Mio from behind and head onto the place where they plan to lodge in.

“Mio, you also felt that?!” (Tomoe)

“Yeah, I can’t feel Waka-sama’s presence at all!” (Mio)

Makoto wasn’t explained this but the people that form a pact can actually tell their approximate location. For Tomoe and Mio, putting aside the times Makoto comes to Asora, they try their best not to bother him in his journey. They already knew their master’s approximate location.

They have also received a direct report today from Shiki that they would be arriving at a place that would move them to Academy Town. With those two points, the two of them, or more like Mio, could cope with the absence of Makoto.

(Tomoe-dono, Mio-dono, can you hear me?! Rai- no, Makoto-sama has disappeared!)

Right at that timing, they receive a thought transmission from the newbie follower that was accompanying Makoto, Shiki. The thought transmission of both Tomoe and Mio to Makoto didn’t show any response. They could tell that it couldn’t even reach him. Because of this fact,

they were grateful at the report from Shiki.

(Disappeared? What do you mean by that-ja? Shiki, calm down. Talk in a clear way so we can understand) (Tomoe)

(Shiki, Shiki! What about Waka-sama?! Waka-sama!) (Mio)

(Ei Mio, shut up for a bit. I am asking that right now. You being noisy won't take us anywhere!) (Tomoe)

Seeing a new source of information, Mio lunges in with the question she wanted to ask the most. But Tomoe who felt that the other side was also not in a calm state, held back her own emotions and rebukes Mio.

(Shiki, you said he disappeared right? First of all, where are you right now-ja?) (Tomoe)

(I am in the second transfer point for Academy Town, a town called Felika. The moment I arrived here, Makoto-sama was gone. Even when I asked the guard that was in the transfer area, he told me that he didn't see him, and then, suddenly the presence of Makoto or more like, the connection between us was broken, and well…!) (Shiki)

It is unusual for Shiki to be in a state of panic. He was a researcher in the past and had a tendency to look at situations in a relatively calm manner. Even when he is like that, he still entered a state of panic when he saw that his master, who was supposed to be with him, disappear suddenly.

(You entered together with him at the previous transfer encampment right?) (Tomoe)

(Yes, without doubt) (Shiki)

(Un, I see. We have lost the connection we had with Waka as well, but we haven't returned to our previous forms. That means Waka is still alive. I may be asking the impossible, but even so, please calm down. For us this is literally out of nowhere. We don't know anything and can't think up any possibilities. We are counting on you) (Tomoe)

Tomoe tries to slowly calm down Shiki first and ask for his explanation. To forcefully restrain an impatient heart and try to act normally is something hard to endure even for Tomoe.

(U-Understood) (Shiki)

(Okay? The disappearance may certainly be sudden. But even with that, there is still something that happened before it. First of all, is that official not lying?) (Tomoe)

(Definitely. I was in a panicked state so I casted a strong hypnotic spell on him. After-effects may appear on him, but I can say with certainty that the information obtained was no lie) (Shiki)

Shiki's words were few, but one could notice he was slightly calmer than before. One could tell he was quite desperate from the fact that he used a strong hypnotic spell on a hyuman without holding back.

(I see. Then, did something happen at the previous transfer encampment?) (Tomoe)

Tomoe didn't pry deeper at the mention of "after effects" from the hypnosis. If there were no points of doubt in the

place they arrived to, the problem must have occurred before that.

(Previous. Even if you ask me about the previous one, there was nothing planted on the transfer formation. We entered just like always and were enveloped by light…) (Shiki)

(Shiki! Just go find Waka-sama! Right this instant! Isn't he anywhere in that village?!) (Mio)

Mio, who was somehow able to stay silent until now, couldn't endure it any longer and calls out. While Tomoe was talking with Shiki, Mio was tapping the ground impatiently and biting the nails on her right hand. It was clear to the eye that she was under heavy amounts of stress because she didn't know the whereabouts of Makoto.

(Mio! This will take just a bit longer so keep quiet! How is it-ja? Nothing coming to your mind?) (Tomoe)

(Light, we were enveloped by light and… Now that I think about it!!) (Shiki)

(Umu! What happened?) (Tomoe)

(It was slight, but I feel like the light changed into a golden color. Then after that, it was just for a bit, but I think I heard something like a noise. Waka-sama lifted his head, so I think he must have felt the same abnormality. And so, when I arrived at Felika, Makoto-sama was nowhere in sight. I was able to safely arrive so it isn't a transfer accident. After that, I shamefully forgot my self-control) (Shiki)

Golden.

The existences that possess this color, Tomoe only knows of two possibilities. One of them is a superior dragon just like her. And the other one… is the Goddess. Golden is a type of special magic. It is normally impossible for magic to possess this color.

(Hmph, golden huh. Did you feel a power when that color change happened?) (Tomoki)

(No, not really. Also, it occurred in practically a second after all) (Shiki)

Even if the transfer formation was created by hyumans, it is still quite the product. Tomoe checked the transfer formation's pattern and construction before Makoto used it, so she could tell.

If we consider that "someone" cut into the activation in an instant and kidnapped one of the two persons that were being transported, that "someone" must possess quite the ability. Having a vast amount of magic power and must also possess a deep understanding in magic.

(Shiki, do you think you are able to go to that magic formation right now and check for the remnants of magic power?) (Tomoe)

(No, that will be hard. The reception preparations for the next transfer are already being done after all) (Shiki)

(I see. Then it will be difficult to pinpoint huh. Shiki, you head to the Academy as it is. You should be the one who has Waka's application documents right? Send those first. After that, if you are in the Academy, Waka should be

able to fly there. It would breed suspicion if he transited again from Tsige) (Tomoe)

(Eh… But Tomoe-dono, to go ahead when we don't even know if Makoto-sama is safe…) (Shiki)

(That's right Tomoe-san! Shiki was the person closest to Waka-sama you know?! What are you thinking desu?!) (Mio)

Mio's objection is understandable. She thought that Tomoe didn't understand the gravity of the situation from the instructions she gave.

(Mio, we should think that Waka-sama has been abducted-ja. The ones responsible can probably be reduced to two) (Tomoe)

(?! What?!) (Shiki)

Shiki answers Tomoe's words with surprise.

(Of course, this is if we follow the logic that the golden light and that noise-like something is related to this situation-ja ga. We don't have any more material to create other deductions, and we can't just stand doing nothing) (Tomoe)

(That is obvious!) (Mio)

Mio approves of Tomoe's words with a strong tone. There is no way Mio would be able to stand and look when this is happening.

(Judging that our pact with Waka is still in effect, it is safe to think that the place where he has been taken,

there is some sort obstruction that blocks the magic power from the outside-ja. From the color gold I can associate two. The first one is the superior dragon they call “Myriad Colors”, Root. The other one is… the Goddess-ja) (Tomoe)

Tomoe would normally hypothesize numerous cases and after deliberate thought, she would filter the possibilities. That is how much her vision is being narrowed right now.

(A superior dragon and… God huh. Certainly, if we talk about golden magic power, I can only think about God. But I don’t think the Goddess would go out of her way to do such a…) (Shiki)

Shiki’s image of God was, at least, not one who would force such reckless actions. The change into golden was just an instant and he had no thoughts of doubting God.

(I will contact Root from my side. But if it really is the work of the Goddess, I am afraid to say that there isn’t much we can do in our present state) (Tomoe)

Tomoe said these words with a mortifying face, as if wanting to grind her teeth.

(No way!) (Mio)

(That’s why, Shiki, you go to the Academy. The only thing we can do is to prepare everything so that master can return as soon as possible to Asora. Even though it’s irritating) (Tomoe)

(Gumuuu. But can’t he search the vicinities?! It is still not certain that the Goddess is the one who did this!!) (Mio)

(That is… No, you are right-ja. It is no good to go along with just reason. Understood, search the vicinities of Felika. When finished, search the surroundings of the Academy as well) (Tomoe)

(Understood!) (Shiki)

Seems like Shiki cut the thought transmission and began acting. Tomoe and Mio soon felt that the thought connection between them was cut.

“Mio, it is as you heard-ja. I will hurry to where Root is. That’s why I want you to be in Asora” (Tomoe)

“I will be going with Tomoe-san as well-desu wa! If this is the act of that dragon, I have to show him how foolish of a move he made with my own hands!” (Mio)

“You can’t-ja” (Tomoe)

“I don’t want to-desu! Why?!” (Mio)

“If… If this was done by the Goddess, it is mortifying but there is not much we can do. Being blocked and not knowing where he is, we are not even able to assist him. Honestly, in that case, the only thing we can do is pray for Waka to calls us on his own or to escape from that place by himself. We could have done something if matters were more apparent, but now that is has already occurred, there is nothing we can do” (Tomoe)

But well, the three followers understood that it is impossible for Makoto to call them by himself. Because he would have already done so if he were able to.

“To escape from God by himself?” (Mio)

Mio looks at Tomoe with a grim expression.

“If Waka is able to escape by himself, his first direction will be Asora. It may be necessary to nurse Waka if he is injured somewhere. If Shiki were here it would be best but, from what we heard, he is quite far away. You are better at healing than me, so please” (Tomoe)

“Tomoe-san…” (Mio)

‘Please’, saying so, Tomoe grasped her hands so strongly that it caused pain. Mio was able to see that and called her name weakly. Tomoe is also Makoto’s follower, there is no way her heart is calm in this situation.

“Honestly, a mysterious feeling is going rampant inside of me and it’s making me want to shout. In truth, even if it takes three days, I want to call back Shiki and have him prepare in case there is a need to heal. But there is also a part of me that is hoping everything was wrong and he is somewhere around Felika’s vicinity” (Tomoe)

“…”

“I am scared, like I have never been before. The fear of losing Makoto-sama. And if it is like this, there is no way I will be able to accept it. If Root is the true culprit of Makoto-sama’s abduction, I will not ask for the reasons, turn it into a bloodbath and return with Waka. Like I care if he is one of the highest existences” (Tomoe)

Tomoe calls Makoto with –sama when she rarely does so.

“Understood. I will wait for Waka-sama at Asora. If he returns, at that time…” (Mio)

“Yeah, tell me as soon as that happens. I will return instantly. Fufu, to have Mio say something nice makes me happy but that would make Shiki’s wait in vain” (Tomoe)

“Even though he is a newcomer he went and accompanied Waka-sama after all. I will have him wait-desu wa” (Mio)

It was a bit forced, but even so, both Tomoe and Mio laughed. To believe in your master and wait, that is an incredibly painful thing to do. To believe and wait sounds nice, but it means to wait for the situation to unfold without being able to do anything. That’s why, in order to drown out their anxiety, they both showed a smile.

When Mio passed through the mist gate Tomoe created, the anguished face Mio made as if praying, eloquently told about the situation they were in.

“Waka, please be safe”

Tomoe, who was more worried about her master than facing a dragon in the top seats, blended into the mist and disappeared.

Chapter 68: Depressing Night

In the border of the world an otherworldler moved, but there were still no ripples occurring in sight.

At that time, Rembrandt, who is known in the world as the Merchant of Tsige, was tackling an opportunity.

The implementation of Stella Fort's capture plan by Limia and Gritonia.

In the battle that was spread out in two directions, the two heroes from both countries increased their morale. Moreover, because of the blessing of the goddess that had reappeared once more, the hyuman's position was gaining advantage.

The Goddess' blessing.

That is what could be called the basis of the big power the hyumans possess in this world.

Before the battle, they report to the Goddess about the beginning of it and the representatives of the troops do a speech. The Goddess confirms both powers and offers divine protection to the one she accepts the most, and the one she doesn't, receives a curse. More specifically speaking, the one that was approved of will have all of his forces doubled in strength and the one who isn't will have it halved.

In short, in the case the speech flows into a blessing situation, putting it in numbers, the distance in strength between the two powers will be of four times. If there is a big difference in military force it may be another story,

but if it is normal, the difference is despairing.

That's why, in this world, the winner and loser of a battle between hyumans was normally decided in the speech step. Because the result was already clear, it was normal for the halved side to surrender. For the sake of being approved by the Goddess, the people pursued beauty and have also made clothes and pompous armor that ignored utility just for the speech with the Goddess. The one she approves is the one that she finds the most beautiful. The royalty and nobles research the appearance of the people that have won in the speech, it couldn't be helped that there were some who went mad because of this. It was directly connected to the power of the country and the family after all.

But that is only the case of fights between hyumans.

In the case it is not between hyumans, the story changes completely. In the speech with the Goddess, she would provide the hyumans with divine protection no questions asked. Even if we count the times in the past where there was a fight the hyumans didn't receive blessings, there were no times where demi-humans obtained blessings. Not a single time. Against an opponent that was doubled in power with no questions asked, the demon race, originally known as demi-humans, were being overwhelmed because of their numerical inferiority. Being pressed by the necessity, the demon race began to assertively research strategy and tactics and obtained know-how numerous times higher than that of hyumans, yet it still continued with the hyumans having the advantage. Before the Goddess' disappearance, the demon race was having those kind of fights.

When the Goddess disappeared, obviously, the speeches became pointless. Even if they made the preparations and express their desire for a speech, they didn't obtain no blessings nor curses.

The 4-times blessing was now not showing effects no matter if the enemy was hyuman or demi-human. The demon race called a big amount of demonic beasts and demi-humans. Increasing their power to the very limit, they marched towards a war against the hyumans. They simply went straightforwardly from the front to crush them, pulverize them with power and numbers. The hyumans that were always been on the crushing side, were now being done in by the demon race. Victory, victory, victory, victory. The momentum didn't stop. They even destroyed one of the five major powers and the demon race was able to obtain large amounts of lands.

The Stella Fort is in the southern tip of that destroyed major power, Elision.

It's a solid fortress that has been attacked numerous times by Limia from the south and Gritonia from the east.

If they have the troops ignore this place and go north, in their march they will be obstructed by an inconvenient large river and swamp as well as a mountain range. It is not impossible but there will be interferences by the demon race. In essence, for them to be able to attack the demon race's domain with a big army, they have to capture the Stella Fort or they won't be able to advance. That there is a courteous route leading directly to the fortress for both countries is one of the ingenuities of the demon race, and there were some intelligent hyumans in

the group that had begun to notice this. Even so, with all the lives used for the battles in this fortress, it took away Limia and Gritonia's reasoning and recognition of this strategy.

The symbol of the hated demon race. A fortress that they have to capture no matter what. The Stella Fort is that kind of existence.

"The impregnable fortress. The devil's fortress that has killed uncountable hyumans huh. Well, it is no surprise you would want to capture it as soon as possible. The descent of the heroes and the revival of blessings, because of those, it is no wonder they are now planning another attack in the once hopeless battlefield"

With the evening passing, the curtains of darkness descend and the shadow of the fortress rises. Before the gate you could see the shadows of the vast amount of troops deployed that spread because of the burning bonfires. A number of shadows gather.

"Yeah. There are some scholars that say this is a trap of the demon race. But even so, this place has sipped too much blood. Limia and the empire can't back down anymore"

Another shadow stands along the shadow that said those words as if complying with it. Those words had a sense of surprise and in a part of it, self-derision as well. The voice that was slightly low came from a slim woman.

"I think that attacking from other places is also an option though. Well, I support this plan as well, there are numerous friends of mine "resting" in this place after all"

The shadow that is on standby a few ways in the back also opens his mouth. A man. He is in favor of bringing down this fortress, but he clearly states that this is an emotional decision of his.

“There are also an uncountable amount of knights that have fallen. This place is an unavoidable point we have to pass in our process to defeat the demon race”

Again, the two shadows, this time it is the shadow that is behind the girl who talked first. The owner of the voice is again a male. Because of the sound of rubbing metal, one could tell that the man is wearing armor.

“4-times blessing and the hero huh. I understand that we are in an advantageous position but… I just can’t brush off this bad feeling”

“What a stupid thing to say. Soon there will a dinner assembly with the empire. Your bad feeling will come true”

From the lined up shadow, an incredulous voice is directed.

“Ahaha. I didn’t feel this way with the spider so it may be needless anxiety. It could be because I just don’t like the empire’s hero called Tomoki”

“Who knows Hibiki, I saw him as a good young man though. He seemed like he was quite young but level-headed. An intrepid youth, is what I thought”

“Ah, I concur with Wudi. For me, he looked like a favorable person. He was a youth that has a strange attraction to him. Even though he looks like that, he can

use a variety of magic tools and in the battlefield he can hunt tens to hundreds of demons. As a hero, he is incredible”

“We don’t know Hibiki’s taste after all. If I hadn’t met with Hibiki first, I may have become that boy’s sword. I felt the same majesty of a hero I felt from you”

“I… I am in the same mind as Hibiki. I didn’t like something about him. I feel like that person is different from Onee-chan”

The girl called Hibiki, thinking that she would be disproved by everyone else, one voice of support called out. A shadow that is smaller than the other shadows. A voice that one could tell it is young.

“So the only ally I have is Chiya-chan huh～. There’s no need to worry, I won’t be putting my personal feelings in the battlefield. Then let’s go for dinner and then sleep. We are going to attack at late night right?” (Hibiki)

Late at night, or more like, doing a dinner assembly just a few hours before? How relaxed, is what Hibiki thought. Is it because that is just how much they expect from her and the other hero? Or is it because they are confident in that so called 4-times blessing?

It is also for doing a last confirmation of the strategy, but under the pretext of a dinner. Feeling a bad presentiment combined with the hero of Limia who she still doesn’t know much about, Otonashi Hibiki looks once more at the bonfire.

(I will bring down that place. The demon general is a

power type giant with 4 hands. We and the empire troops, no matter which group meets it, the heroes will reunite at where the demon general is and strike this huh. It is predicted that the military force of our combined troops is approximately five times that of the demon race side. Moreover, if we count the halving of their power, it is essentially 20 times? I don't understand the numbers in battle but 20 times is a number that brings peace of mind. But well~ the fortress's intensity is not halved, so it is not like we have an advantage in terrain. The 4-times is something that counts as a whole right? Our side is doubled and the other is halved. So then, if the demon race just negates that "halve", the advantage will only be of double) (Hibiki)

In terms of tactics, the demon race is better. She remembers those words from a meeting. There is no need to even do a final confirmation. Getting the blessing, attacking from two directions and if the top appears, use the heroes to defeat him. A simple thing. For some reason, because of the wishes of the empire, the attack was turned to a night assault.

The demon race knows the hyumans movements by a certain degree, is what Hibiki thinks. In that case, there should be some sort of action that differs from all the situationsbefore, and yet, there is no reaction in sight. Ominous.

In this world there is magic. If so, even without having cannons in the fortress they should be able to suddenly rain attacks resembling those of cannons from their side. More like, I am overthinking things, is what she thought. Taking into account the applications, she can't even

estimate what kind of magic they have.

That kind of uneasiness is probably what was making Hibiki have a bad presentiment.

—

“Welcome, Limia’s hero-sama”

Approaching the pavilion, the pondering Hibiki was greeted by a cheerful voice.

“Ara, isn’t this princess Lily? Thank you for going to the trouble of meeting me. I am honored to be invited in this occasion” (Hibiki)

The smiling Hibiki stops her thoughts and speaks out her previously arranged words by reflex. For the sake of not being discourteous, her companions and the nobles accompanying them were taught a few things. The girl kept in mind to use polite words.

The other party is the princess of Gritonia, a major power that possesses at least the same scale in influence as Limia Kingdom. No matter if she is a hero, as an individual, this person is not someone you can act impolitely. Hibiki felt nervous.

“I am of the same sentiment. Sorry for having called you out here. We have prepared a little service to you and the people that will be your comrade in arms. This night please recuperate your energies” (Lily)

While being perplexed by the rare event of having a royalty guide her, the hero of Limia follows the girl’s steps.

In the round table that was prepared, there were already a number of people seated.

When they saw Hibiki's arrival, those people stopped their conversations, stood up and met the princess and the girl being guided by her.

"Hi! It is before the nap but, let's enjoy the meal without minding about ranks!"

"Now, Hibiki-sama, this way please"

Following the princess, Hibiki is assaulted by a melancholic feeling. It is because of the words that were directed at her. Just how light they were.

Furthermore, the empire is strangely not saying anything about what was said, making her feel sickened. That her own companions didn't show any sort of displeasure was also eerie.

As expected, Hibiki was guided to the vacant seat directly beside the seat of where the empire hero, Iwahashi Tomoki, is. There were no other places to sit beside this one. To refuse the seat that the princess has guided her to would be an act of impoliteness. Moreover, the ones who said there is no need to mind about ranks, are people that don't forgive impoliteness.

While sighing in her mind, Hibiki shows the princess a well-made fake smile. And faces Tomoki.

"Thanks for your consideration, Tomoki-kun. It will be a night warfare but, let's both do our best" (Hibiki)

Common words. Hibiki already knew Tomoki was

younger than her even when it is the first time they have met, so she decided to call him with the suffix –kun.

“We are used to night battles so it is okay. We might even be able to cover Limia’s side as well” (Tomoki)

“That is reassuring. We don’t have that much experience in large scaled night battles so I am expecting much from your side” (Hibiki)

“Moreover, this is a mid-boss fight. Let’s end this in one sweep and have the Goddess praise us. Ah, I wonder if she will give us more powers” (Tomoki)

“Now that you mention it, the blessing speech is done by Tomoki-kun right? Will I be able to meet the Goddess again? I haven’t met her since the first time, and there are a lot of things I want to ask her” (Hibiki)

Hibiki felt like the situation she is experiencing is different from the situation the Goddess herself explained, so she wants to meet her again. Even though she has power and divine protection, the only time she has talked with her is in the very beginning.

She felt an uncomfortable feeling at Tomoki’s “mid-boss” words, so Hibiki changed her thoughts to the Goddess and maintains her smile.

“Ah, also, what level are you now Hibiki?” (Tomoki)

Tomoki suddenly asks Hibiki her level. The other members were being guided by the chamberlains, taking their seats and respectively chat and bring the food that is served into their mouths. Hibiki is also taking part in the meal but can’t properly taste the food. She wasn’t in

the mood of enjoying the meal.

The only one that looked uncomfortable was Chiya who had the same opinion about having an unpleasant feeling of Tomoki. And a girl from the empire's side that was about the same age as Chiya, began talking to her and bit by bit she indulges herself or so it seems.

"Me? I am 430 now" (Hibiki)

"I see. I have become 605 now" (Tomoki) <Take in mind, there is no note of who is talking, I do those myself. I seriously thought this was a talk about age between the two lolis>

"Heh~ that's impressive. And that's how much you have participated in the battlefield" (Hibiki)

"Yeah. That's why, Hibiki-san, you may be 3 years older than me but, could you please not call me with –kun? There is no need to go as far as calling me with –sama, -san is fine maybe, when talking to someone that is stronger" (Tomoki)

(Who's the one that said there's no need to mind about ranks?!)

Hibiki desperately tries to hold back the tsukkomi she wanted to do. The 100% fake smile on her face was now showing signs of crumbling.

"I-I am sorry. I am still using the customs of the other side to talk. From now on I will be careful" (Hibiki)

"Nah, I don't mind it though. Also, I am sorry but, I don't like formal speech" (Tomoki) <Wow Tomoki wtf, did

you check your tampon? >

(I am just adding –desu. There's no way I would expect formal speech from you who is saying "domo" and "ore"! And also, if you don't mind it, don't mention it! Isn't it fine to just let it go then?!) (Hibiki)

"I don't mind about formal speech anyways, so it's okay. It is fine to just talk the way you like" (Hibiki)

"Is that so? Iya, that's a big help. I was insecure of when I would mess up you see. We are going to do a swift attack on a demon general today, so I was thinking about having Hibiki-san and the others accompany us from the beginning, how about it?" (Tomoki)

In a sense, this is a conversation between the representatives of both countries. This is a link for diplomacy, is what Hibiki thinks. Even so, she felt like her head would split from anemia because of his words.

If this were the other side, the other world, such a kouhai taking that kind of attitude would get a proper sermon. Or could it be that the current middle school students are all like this? If that is the case, she is grateful to have been able to come to a different world. There is no better blessing than this.

"… It is a pleasant proposal, but we have to encourage the people of Limia and participate in battle. When the time comes, I will rush okay?" (Hibiki)

While feeling her own expression twitching, Hibiki was somehow able to pass the dinner assembly, also called as the patience test.

Just one person, Chiya, was preoccupied by Hibiki's state. When the dinner assembly ended and they left the pavilion, they returned to their own camps and the girl worriedly approached Hibiki.

"Hibiki onee-chan, are you okay? Should I serve you tea to calm down?" (Chiya)

"Chiya-chan, geez, just how much of a good girl are you! If that idiot were to have this much courtesy, the story would have been a bit different!" (Hibiki)

The other members didn't understand why Hibiki was angry and could only tilt their heads.

"Hibiki, could it be that you don't like the food of the empire?"

"If that was the case, you should have told the other party or it will conversely turn as discourteous Hibiki-dono"

Hearing the words that were way off the mark, as expected, even she had to stop her steps.

"Eh?! Just how serious are you saying that?! How come the conversation didn't turn into how rude that Tomoki was to me, isn't that weird you guys?!" (Hibiki)

Chiya also agrees with Hibiki and nods several times.

"W-What is it you are so angry for? Tomoki-dono went through the trouble of holding a comfortable dinner assembly, said that he would provide us support in the fight, moreover, he casually pointed out to Hibiki about using –kun on a higher ranked person. And after that,

wasn't his trustworthy proposition nice?"

Naval, the woman warrior that Hibiki considers as a companion the most in the battlefield, releases words as if counting a short story.

"What were you seeing on that full-throttle rude machine to reach such conclusions?!" (Hibiki)

Hibiki is astonished by her own companion's words. Even Bredda and Wudi, who normally warn Naval when she says too much, were agreeing with Naval's words.

(What is this? Are you telling me everyone turns weird when they meet him?) (Hibiki)

Even so, Chiya and I were alright. Just what in the world is going on? Hibiki didn't think she would have to ponder about how to talk with her companions in order for them to understand. She began thinking there was some sort of reason for it.

"Well, let's leave that aside for now. I got a bit out of control. Okay, let's sleep. The fight is close after all. Chiya-chan, let's sleep together" (Hibiki)

Pursuing this point at present will not get anywhere. When they sleep and wake up, the war will have begun already. She understands that she should not bring unneeded discord.

When Hibiki returns to her bedroom with Chiya, she was deeply moved by how easily she was able to fall asleep.

Chapter 69: Hibiki's Distress

The battle silently began.

Finishing the ceremonial-kind of speech with the Goddess without any problems, both the empire and kingdom troops were given the Goddess' blessing. At the same time, the demon race is supposed to have received the half curse.

Hibiki felt uneasy thinking that the Gritonia hero would do something stealthily, but it was practically him reading directly out of a paper and the speech ended without any suspense.

The kingdom's troops began their advance just as scheduled and made contact with the enemy. Hibiki and the others, who were quite a few ways behind the frontlines, felt the air of the battlefield with their skin.

But the situation was a bit different from expectations.

It is certain that the allies' strength increased quite a lot. Even Hibiki who was half in doubt could see in plain sight that the spell's power had literally doubled.

However, she didn't feel as if their enemies were halved. It is not like Hibiki herself entered the battlefield to confirm but, they didn't seem weakened to the point of being halved.

Even so, the progress of the battle was going favorably. The hyuman side had charged a number of times in the field and were scattering the demon race as if ripping scraps of paper. There was not even a single instance

where their side was forced back.

It was a progress that would make one think the only thing left is the inside of the fortress. The kingdom and also the empire pushed their troops until the front of the fortress. The front part of the fortress that was widely open by the demons themselves. Consequently, there were quite the numbers that began flooding the fortress.

The morale was high. It was just a matter of time before they could assault the inside of the fortress.

But all these chain of events in the battle were done without the assistance of Hibiki and the others, and the empire has not made any reports of the 4-armed general appearing. All these points made Hibiki have doubts. The alarms inside Hibiki's head were ringing at full force. They are trying to tell Hibiki something.

"Ne, Naval. This is kind of weird. No matter the circumstances, this is way too easy. This place is the impregnable fortress right?" (Hibiki)

"Yeah, there's no way this will end without us doing anything. Could it be that the empire's hero-sama is doing quite the participation?" (Naval)

Hibiki cleanly ignores the last part of her words and just puts the point of view of the fortress in her mind. Even the mercenary who has a lot of experience in the battlefield, Naval, felt this strangeness. It may mean something is really going to happen. Her instincts are trying to tell her something, but because of her own lack of experience, she is unable to think of anything. That is irritating.

“But! As long as we conquer the gate, the battle will be decided! Soon we will be able to drop the Stella Fort! Finally we will be able to do the first step to revive Elision!” (Bredda)

Bredda was in a completely excited state. He was in a state where there is no way he can think rationally. Even Wudi who was in line with Chiya had an unusual expression of excitement while looking at the battlefield.

Chiya was getting a bit used to the battlefield, but she still held fear of the air in it. It was like she was somehow able to stay firm by staying at everyone’s side.

That’s right, Bredda and Wudi’s state told about the battlefield. Literally an assault right from the front. In the battlefield there was already no empire nor kingdom. They hold slightly different directions, but both troops collected in one at the fortress and were heading to the gate.

“I just can’t brush off this bad feeling. Wudi, Chiya-chan. Just in case, prepare a suspended spell formation for defense barrier and high-speed movement” (Hibiki)

“But doing that for everyone is impossible. It would cost me an eye to even do our surroundings” (Chiya)

Chiya’s fainthearted statement. The amount of magic power doesn’t directly relate to the range a spell can reach. She was not good at expanding the area of her spells.

“If it’s only the party, I can cast the high-speed movement. But all the unit is just impossible. I am not a

spirit after all" (Wudi)

Wudi, on the other hand, didn't have as much magic power amount as Chiya. Even if he is able to control it, the useable magic power couldn't handle it.

"Then I don't mind if it's only us. We are doing nothing anyways, so please" (Hibiki)

While having puzzled feelings, the two of them accept the request of the hero. They form the spell and leave it in a standby state. They are still a hero party after all. This level of feat is possible for them.

(If it were me, what would I prepare? The thing I would do if the empire army and the kingdom army gathered in one place would be…) (Hibiki)

Hibiki ponders. The cliffs at both sides of Stela Fort. It was originally a fortress that worked as a bottleneck. Rather, she didn't understand why the demon race had the front part of the fortress, which was narrow to begin with, open before the battle, making it easier to assault. To have soldiers stationed on the cliffs and have them attack from above. But that is already something they have been doing. The army received attacks from the upper part of the fortress and the cliffs.

What she thought about next was the difference in height. The fortress is in a high position and the hyuman troops charged from the low part of the hill road. But it isn't a slope with that much of an inclination. From the present condition, it looks like one could use falling rocks on the front gate, but there is no plausible reason in having the enemy get so close to them just to do so.

They could also inundate the castle, but a lot of water is needed to do so. Just like the falling rocks, it feels like they are taking into account the season.

(Could it be… the one where walls on the left and right close in like in the movies of treasure hunters? That is exactly what one would use when the enemy is advancing in a narrow path. Just what in the world do they plan on doing? Well, if I can at least make it so we can return to the camp, we should be able to cope with most of anything that could come… probably) (Hibiki)

In the first place, the strategy this time had a lot of points Hibiki didn't understand. And it is not only related to the enemy army. It is also about the hero that in the moment her companions got involved with him, they began singing praises. She just couldn't understand. It is true that Hibiki didn't have that much experience in night warfare, but if they are going through the trouble of doing it, at least they should do it when the moon isn't out. And if possible in a cloudy weather with few stars, that way it would make the plan more solid, is what Hibiki thought. It seems that the Empire was pretty adamant with the day, but even after the plan started, Hibiki couldn't understand its true meaning.

While thinking that, she looks at her own army.

This is madness. This was truly a space where madness took control. Even though the longed for fortress is right in front of their eyes, the soldiers that are in the front line could only see the gate and the capitulation of it. Moreover, in the battlefield before the gate that should normally only have front line soldiers, there are units from the middle area and even spell casters that should

be in the rear. Furthermore, the same was happening with the Empire's army.

In front of the demon race fortress that stole their friends and family. For Hibiki, this place hasn't stolen anyone from her but, she began to understand a bit the meaning of those words from the madness that they were releasing.

(This is… war huh. Even if I understand it, it is still hard to bear. To be received with praises and shouts of joy because of killing) (Hibiki)

Even the calm Naval showed a flame in her eyes that couldn't be hidden. The only ones feeling fear were probably Chiya and herself, is what Hibiki thought.

She saw the demon race as enemies, as existences that must be eradicated, is what she believed and thought she understood. But she didn't notice that from a whimsical thought, she was unconsciously counting the demon race's deaths as human deaths. These are remains of the way of thinking from her previous world. Speaking the truth, for Hibiki, the demon race's outward appearance were those of a human being.

(No, it may be the same with Tomoki. He is a person that was originally from Japan after all. That is only if his attitude before was just him *pretending to be tough*) (Hibiki) <As in fighting his own feelings>

On the boy that looked like he trusted too much on his level, Hibiki fixed a "probably" on him while thinking. Living in a world where you wouldn't normally get to see the death of people up close, there is no way one can

adapt in this battlefield so easily after all.

“Ah, the gate is…”

“Opening!”

Naval and Bredda’s words. Hibiki thought those were her own words, but she felt relief that it would end in just her pointless fears.

The welling up yells of the united hyuman troops resound in the battlefield like angry roars.

At that moment.

The pointless fears that Hibiki had thrown away, had suddenly become real.

The ground… collapsed.

In a fortress that is on the top of a gentle hill road, just before the gates the ground opened up. Everything of it.

As if taking the yells of the hyumans as a signal.

It collapsed in a breath. Saying it more precisely, it disappeared. Below it, darkness. Even when taking into account it was night, the scenery below still felt like a deep hades.

A silence of a few seconds. So that ground was already a product of magic huh. There weren’t even sounds coming from the ground that “collapsed”.

(The ground… dissapeared?!) (Hibiki)

Was it surprise or stupefaction? A strange space with the

voice of no one spread in the battlefield.

Just how many managed to understand that the ground had disappeared just like the Limia hero?

“Wudi! Chiya-chan!” (Hibiki)

Hibiki had prepared just in case, so she was able to react faster than anyone else. It was a situation where the two spells prepared could serve. In a situation where one would normally ask for the high-speed movement support magic only, just in case, there was the suspended magic formation above prepared by Chiya. A fine play from Hibiki.

After another few seconds later, the spell activated and Hibiki’s party was able to avoid dropping. A faint light blue barrier is activated as well and a magic defense dome was created.

“Aaa… aaahh…”

The voices of the falling allies were heard by the party.

There is no way to know how far this hole continued on, but since they didn’t prepare any countermeasures for it, the result that was awaiting them could already be predicted.

Looking at it in an objective way, half of the soldiers that went mad and entered the frontlines had disappeared in a second.

At the reality that one could only think of as absurd, Hibiki couldn’t utter a word. The only ones remaining from the kingdom’s army were the spell casters at the

rear guard, the bow unit and the knight units that were positioned with the nobles at the center.

Partial destruction… no, a bigger damage than that.

While constantly praying that the ones who fell were able to cope with it somehow on their own, Hibiki, without caring about the place, yelled out words to her party as if trying to suppress the scream that was trying to come out.

“Wudi, for now return up! Please try to move as much to the rear as possible. Naval and Bredda will come with me and find as many units remaining as possible, Chiya maintain the barrier okay?!” (Hibiki)

Hibiki looks up. It is something to be expected but… arrows and stones, as well as spells of many colors began to rain at them.

“… Naval, Bredda. Change of plans. Until we are able to return up, intercept! Come out as well Horn! We are going to survive!” (Hibiki)

While Hibiki calls from the silver belt the guardian wolf beast, Horn, her words were also to encourage herself.

Translator: Some may be as confused as me in the last part. Wudi was supposed to use a “high-speed movement” which is a teleport skill, they would teleport outside the hole and then look for everyone. But it seems they are still inside the hole with only the barrier to make them float, maybe? And a lot of attacks began to rain while they were still inside the hole. I don’t have a

clear image of what position they are in right now.

Chapter 70: Heroes Reunite

While flying through the sky throwing shining lights out of his godly spear at the demon race and burning them off, the empire's hero, Iwahashi Tomoki, was in a state of confusion.

Literally the moment when the gate opened and were in the phase where they would assault the fortress and take the head of the general…

The people in the surroundings disappeared.

When looking below, there was a crazy big black hole. People, weapons, a part of the demons as well. Having a dispersed look as if seeing a CG, people were being sucked up by that hades.

The hostility that was being directed to him. From the opened gate, Tomoki noticed the magic shot and he used a destruction light from his godly spear to disperse them all. At the same time, he remembers something important.

About his comrades.

Ginebia, Mora, Yukinatsu.

The comrades that fought alongside him and protected him.

Tomoki activates a necklace-shaped sorcerer tool and searches the surroundings. He soon finds a reaction of the three.

Because of the silver boots the Goddess provided him he

was able to float in the air without using magic power, so he was able to invalidate that crazy trap, but his comrades were standing in the ground normally.

Because of that he was the first target of the attacks, but with all the overwhelming equipment that was clad in his body, it was nothing.

“Did you fall you three?!” (Tomoki)

Saying that, Tomoki pursues the reaction. The reaction of the three was a bit below. Thankfully, it was practically on the same place they were.

When he reaches them, they were all gathered up in one place and floating. But that spell may have been incomplete, they seem to be slowly lowering.

“You are slow Tomoki! The replica of the silver boots is not complete so if there is something heavy we will fall!”

“Oi Yukinatsu, are you referring to me? I can’t just let that slip by”

Ginebia, who is wearing a plate mail and is clearly the heaviest of them all, lifts an eyebrow and reproaches her comrade’s words.

“Don’t fight. The two of you are heavier than me after all!”

““Of course we are!””

A third voice rings into the conversation that seemed like it would transform into a dispute and the two answer with the same words. Compared to the chibi girl Mora,

the difference in height was clear.

Thanks to the creation of Yukinatsu, who came from an alchemist linage, the three somehow were able to save themselves. Tomoki also strokes his chest in relief.

The exchange between the three also helped as an ingredient to calm down.

“I am glad that you guys are fine” (Tomoki)

“Tomoki… I am your shield. I won’t die without protecting you” (Ginebia)

“Don’t frankly make that kind of face, so embarrassing” (Yukinatsu)

“We are totally fine!” (Mora)

Because of the heartfelt words of worry from him, the three appeal their wellbeing with blushed faces.

“What a grand way they got us with, how cocky for a mid-boss. Mora, call Nagi please. For now we will retreat. Without confirming the situation we can’t decide to continue the battle” (Tomoki)

“… You are right. Just how many soldiers did we lose here?”

“What an absurd trap. The one who made it is crazy in the head”

“Understood, I will call Nagi” (Mora)

“Yeah, I am counting on you. There will probably be quite the amount of attacks coming from above anytime

soon. Ginebia and I will block every single one of them, you can do it right?" (Tomoki)

"Of course. I won't let you nor Nagi receive a single wound. Don't underestimate a royal guard" (Ginebia)

"Thanks, Ginebia" (Tomoki)

Mora continues chanting an aria at her jewel, and while in the middle of giving his thanks to Ginebia, below the party that was slowly falling, a dragon was summoned. A type of flying dragon that possesses giant wings. It's Nagi, who Mora controls.

Its emerald green scales are beautiful, a medium class dragon. It is also one of the individuals that are the closest to Mora.

"Nagi, go up! When we reach on top of the hole, we are going to retreat to the back. Please!" (Mora)

"GYAU" (Nagi :v)

On top of the dragon, while deflecting the attacks that rain, Tomoki reaches in front of the gate.

"What in the world, even the road at the back has become a hole. The rear guard is really the only part remaining" (Tomoki)

"Tomoki, let's try to save as many people as possible by having them ride Nagi" (Ginebia)

Ginebia suggests. If they create a barrier around so the people don't get blown away, the space Nagi has to carry people is still quite enough. These were words that had

taken into consideration this fact.

“Ginebia, that is no good. First we have to return as fast as possible and report this to Lily. That is the highest priority” (Tomoki)

Tomoki rejects Ginebia’s suggestion. For him, it would just be unnecessary luggage and the mobility would decrease. A result he didn’t desire.

“But!!” (Ginebia)

“For a while now I haven’t been able to get in contact with Lily. Also, this is war. Because it is war, it is fine to just fight as much as the amount of people that died in order to repay them” (Tomoki)

“Tomoki… I am sorry. I became emotional” (Ginebia)

Just like how they have done until now, Tomoki’s words enter Ginebia’s heart and body as if permeating her. She was able to accept hiswords’ logic quite naturally.

“Don’t mind, it is fine if the usual Ginebia has returned. Now then, let’s go back!” (Tomoki)

“Wait Tomoki”

“What is it Yukinatsu?” (Tomoki)

“Is it fine to not look for the hero of Limia and the others?” (Yukinatsu)

Even in a battlefield that has fallen into chaos, is it fine to not confirm the safety of one of the two figureheads? Is what Yukinatsu tries to ask.

Even if she is a hero, in a situation like this, it is not definite that she was able to deal with it calmly. No matter if retreating is the priority, it is not strange to ask about the Limia hero.

“Hibiki huh. She is also a hero. She must have managed something by herself. Me being worried about her may actually turn into being rude to her. It seems she is a “Senior Onee-san” after all” (Tomoki)

Just because the said person isn’t there, Tomoki calls the other hero, who he was calling with –san a few moments back, without any suffix.

“I see. If Tomoki has something planned then it’s fine. Let’s go” (Yukinatsu)

“Yosh, Mora I’m counting on you” (Tomoki)

“Okay! Nagi, do it!” (Mora)

“Nice. But since we went through all the trouble of coming here…” (Tomoki)

Tomoki turns to the opposite direction of Nagi’s orientation, in short, he faces the fortress. What he prepares is his favorite God Spear. The cone-shaped riding spear is enveloped by light and, in time, everything shines.

“This is payback!” (Tomoki)

Determining his aim, Tomoki releases the power of his spear at the gate that was trying to close. The light that straightforwardly travelled enters a gap in the closing gate… and created a thunderous roar.

“Quite the aim there”

“Oh… Sniper!”

“Onii-chan, nice～!”

To the ovations of the three, Tomoki makes a “this much is easy” face. Just in case, he uses the necklace to check the surroundings.

“Otto. It seems the Limia Hero and the others are alright. They are over there” (Tomoki)

“Oh. Heh～ you are right. Maybe I should make a replica of that necklace next. That is pretty convenient” (Yukinatsu)

Yukinatsu, a bit slower, uses something resembling a binocular to confirm Limia’s party. Knowing that Tomoki used the sorcerer tool to search the area, Yukinatsu showed the greed of a researcher. Prove that she was now a bit more composed.

“At a later time okay?” (Tomoki)

Feeling a bit of discomfort in being a guinea pig of Yukinatsu, Tomoki responds in a vague way. To make a replica there is a need to have the sorcerer tool activated and observed for long periods of time. That time is quite a pain for him.

“You are still unable to contact Lily-sama?”

Ginebia asks. It is natural for her to be worried about the wellbeing of her other master.

“Yeah. I may be repeating myself but, does this world have the so called jamming?” (Tomoki)

The latter half Tomoki whispers it as if talking to himself. While they were flying, they catch up with Hibiki and the others. As expected of someone riding a dragon, even though Hibiki and the others were the first ones to escape, Tomoki’s side was faster.

“Great to see you are safe Hibiki-san. Your side’s movements are a bit dull, did something happen?” (Tomoki)

“… Is your detection ability low? It is the long awaited demon general” (Hibiki)

Thinking that Hibiki and the others just didn’t have enough strength to use the transmission, Tomoki points out their dull movements, but his face stiffens at her response.

Instead of the cold tone of voice of Hibiki, Tomoki shows shock at the words demon general.

“Demon general you say?! At our back?!” (Tomoki)

“That’s right. Moreover, he politely said he will wait for us to reform. Words you wouldn’t expect from someone who set such a trap. And so we are in the middle of having the rear guard fall back as fast as possible. Understood?” (Hibiki)

As fast as possible. Hibiki returns a begrudging tone at the insensible words of Tomoki.

“No way, just how…” (Tomoki)

“Who knows? They must have used a hand we don’t know yet. By the way, more than the demon general, it is the fact that I can’t get in contact with the troops that are supposed to be at the rear at all. Incredible huh, it seems the demon race is able to obstruct our transmissions. Meaning, there is a chance the demon race can intercept thought transmission. How unpleasant” (Hibiki)

“Jamming and… information leak. Isn’t that fatal?” (Tomoki)

Tomoki seems to have understood the situation. He spews out gloomy words.

“And? What will you guys do?” (Hibiki)

“What, you say… about what?” (Tomoki)

“If we encounter the demon general it will be a joint front, or at least that’s how it’ssupposed to goright?” (Hibiki)

Up to this day, this is a first. Or more like, this is the first time Hibiki has smiled at Tomoki from the bottom of her heart .

“The situation is different isn’t it?! This should be the setting where we cut up the enemy encampment as fast as possible and escape right?! If we continue the battle like this, we will head straight to the bad end!” (Tomoki)

“Setting… setting huh. If that’s the case, you guys escape. I will believe that the unit at the rear will do a pincer attack with us and defeat him. Well, if we were able to contact each other we would be able to cooperate in the escape though. In terms of strategy this is totally our loss.

To be honest, I have taken an interest in that demon general" (Hibiki)

In these kind of scenario, Hibiki feels a conclusive gap in Tomoki who was talking as if he were in a dream or illusion. Hibiki feels a part of her is looking at him in a cold way.

And in a part she is happily talking as if having fun. Tomoki also shows puzzled eyes as if looking at such a living being for the first time.

"You… are you an idiot?" (Tomoki)

"No way. Also, I didn't ask you to cooperate right? In any case, you and I have bad compatibility. The selling point of you guys is the mid-range fire power. Most of my party is close quarter. Your side shows best performance when fighting against big numbers, our side when we fight against fewer. Even if we fight the same opponent, I think our steps would be different" (Hibiki)

(Also, the attitude)

Hibiki secretly adds.

"In short, you are saying we can't form a joint front?" (Tomoki)

"I'm just saying there is no point in doing so in this case. I just don't see the merit of uniting. I don't like being shot by my allies" (Hibiki)

"… Then, it is fine right?" (Tomoki)

"Yeah. Just, lead the troops and use that fire power to

clean up as many enemies over there. If you do that, it will make it possible for more surviving units to escape. We will take the opened path and attract the big-shot. Role division. Let's go with that in this case" (Hibiki)

"Understood. If you say that much, make sure to nail the demon general okay?" (Tomoki)

"Of course" (Hibiki)

The conversation with the two heroes finishes.

A slight meeting takes place in both parties.

Numerous times, voices of objections sound.

And those grew lower in time. Both sides show will and determination.

The time the two armies clash once more… is close.

Chapter 71: Ring

“Tomoki, Iwahashi Tomoki! Wait, weren’t you listening?!”

“I heard and understood everything! The moment where the enemy has his guard lowered the most is right now when our rear guard is sluggishly falling back! I will open you your path so shut up!” (Tomoki)

The dragon takes the lead and Hibiki’s group chases.

“The retreat has not finished yet and if we do something like begin the battle again it will only expand the damage of the units! The enemy has already been deployed and waiting, there is no way you can expect that much negligence from their side!” (Hibiki)

“If there is just a bit, that is enough! We are in the battlefield. Everyone is prepared to die! Hibiki-san, you are way too soft!” (Tomoki)

“Don’t mess around! What are you trying to achieve by deepening the chaos in your own team! We should find the escape routes that are possible and see how many units we can use…” (Hibiki)

“A geez! You are noisy! Don’t you understand?! A hero is a figurehead and that will serve as a salvation! This way more people will be saved! It is obvious which one is more beneficial! We are special! Chosen ones! If you say you want to die, do as you wish. I don’t care about that self-satisfaction. I will do your part as a hero in Limia as well so don’t worry!” (Tomoki)

Hibiki's group is taking the road where the rear guard should retreat and Tomoki is riding a dragon to mobilize. Their natural speed is clear and the distance between them slowly widens.

Words already couldn't reach. In the path they have taken there is only scorched ruins. Even if their speed can't be compared to that of when they are fighting, the difference between a dragon and a person can't be filled so easily.

"What a guy. Isn't encouraging the troops, standing in the battlefield as a standard-bearer, the way a hero should be? For him to try to save himself no matter what. I won't approve that" (Hibiki)

"But Tomoki-dono has a point as well. If we lose you, Hibiki, in this battle, the thousands of people you could have saved will no longer be saved. Your life is far more important than the hundreds of soldiers we are looking to save here" (Naval)

"Naval, shut up. I don't want to hear anymore. I won't ask. Because I still want to stay as your partner" (Hibiki)

"Hibiki-dono…" (Bredda)

Hibiki shakes her head horizontally at Bredda's words.

"This is one way as a hero. I understand that is what you want to say. That our job is to survive at any cost. But I don't like that. Also this can also be called a way of surviving in a fatal situation. In the middle of fighting the enemy general, if there is an opening somewhere, we will escape at once. That is what I am also thinking. I know

this is optimistic thinking though” (Hibiki)

She knows this is quite the wishful way of thinking, even so, she doesn’t want to say this is completely hopeless directly from her mouth. A decent reconnaissance has not been done. Then she at least wants to have this much hope. It is also the naïveness of Hibiki whowas raised in modern society.

“It doesn’t change the fact that we got the short end of the straw, but someone has to do it. There is the chance the demon general will surround the remaining troops. If you tell me that is the responsibility of a hero, that is certainly true. Yareyare” (Wudi)

Wudi. He may have seen the hero way in Hibiki’s actions, it seems he hadresolved himself to what was to come.

“I will do my best. I won’t fall down in the middle like last time!” (Chiya)

Chiya. Remembering the time with the black spider when she dropped out and left Hibiki all by herself, she brings out her fighting spirit.

“I am sorry, the hero I chose is Hibiki. I will accompany you till the end” (Naval)

“Me also, I won’t be defeated so pathetically like last time. We are the five that pushed the calamity away. Something like a demon general, we will be able to deal with him somehow” (Bredda)

Naval and Bredda.

Tomoki, while burning the demon troops with

overwhelming fire power, slows down his pace and Hibiki confirms his location.

Is he waiting for her, or is he just having difficulties. No matter which one it is, she won't accept the ways of that hero. That is what Hibiki decided.

Increasing her pace by one, the girl runs down the gentle slope and finds a messenger soldier. She makes her way to where he is.

"T-This is hero-sama! Just as instructed, we are having all troops retreat!"

Feeling deeply moved to have a heaven descended person, the hero, pat his shoulder, the young messenger soldier returns an upright and firm salutation.

"Thanks for your hard work. I am sorry for the continuous changes but, I want you to send a message to the generals of each unit. To stop the retreat and silently reorganize. Me and the Gritonia hero will open a path to escape so follow us" (Hibiki)

"That is…"

"I understand. They can't change their movements so constantly. But please. Also, tell the same thing to the Empire. In this kind of situation, there is no Empire nor Kingdom. We are definitely going to open our way" (Hibiki)

"… Yes, understood ma'am!"

He breathes deeply and slowly exhales it.

Seeing the running man that is hurrying to spread the message, Hibiki does one deep breath.

Silently closing her eyes, instead of resuming her breathing, she envisions the future. This is a habit she does whenever she is about to have a match with a strong opponent in kendo.

“Let’s go!” (Hibiki)

Hibiki’s party runs through the corpse-filled path that Tomoki has opened. It’s vexing, but this kind of destruction power deserves a special mention, is what the girl thinks. This is a feat Hibiki wouldn’t be able to accomplish. At least not in this short amount of time.

Taking into account the mobility of the dragon Mora called, coupled with the sturdy defense of Ginebia that is riding it, the high firepower of Tomoki who is using sacred treasures, and also the one providing support to Ginebia’s defense and Tomoki’s firepower, the one utilizing a replica storage and mass producing golems with alchemy, Yukinatsu.

Their figure when destroying the barriers the demons create with surplus and pushing on is fierce. As long as their barriers can’t resist, it would mean the only ones that could stop their advance is someone who has a good amount of power. In short, this means that they are able to shine indefinitely against these demon soldiers.

Just how many are feeling uncomfortable by the fact that this man is only opening this path just for obtaining his own safety. This is what Hibiki thought while looking at that far back.

“These are the last two!” (Tomoki)

Even the unit that was in front of the 4-armed general and wielded relatively high-class equipment were being burned down by the enhanced mowing light that was being shot from Tomoki’s spear. And the blaze that Nagi breathed out also minces the soldiers that try to approach. It seems it was spewing out an invisible wind blade.

The ones who thought about grabbing the flying dragon to obstruct its movements were scattered by the golems. People, beasts; the lifeless dolls that donned different forms didn’t permit the approach of anything.

“What an inelegant hero we have here. Looks like a kid raging at a party”

Releasing his crossed arms, the light purple skinned giant makes a fist. To be about three meters in height made him a small one in the Giants race, but the muscles that were packed in that body and the overpowering aura that spread out showed that he is a demon who is befitting of his title as a general.

The words that he directed to the hero also carried weight. It was calm yet heavy. And the presence of the 4 fists he made were also quite the thing.

“We don’t know about the inelegant part! Aren’t you the one with the broken head, going barehanded in combat?” (Tomoki)

Tomoki throws a light as a substitute of a greeting.

“Mun!!”

The demon general, with one hand, intercepts the dark cleaving light.

Meeting a collision, the light disappears. But the arm that was used to intercept this attack was burned black and had lost its base form.

“… As expected, one hit won’t be enough huh. Well, your opponent is another one. With this I am bidding sayonara. There’s no way I would lose if I fought, but I have to keep my promises you know!” (Tomoki)

The surplus-filled Tomoki and the others change direction, avoiding the front where the demon general is and beginning their attack on the troops at the left side.

“I won’t let you do that! Mu!”

The demon general tried to chase Tomoki, but feeling something, he looks at the path where Tomoki had appeared in.

A something clad in crimson light and crescent moon shape was approaching. As if running after Tomoki who is riding a dragon.

“Hoh～, this one looks like a warrior. Did you get a chance to learn speech?” (Four arms)

Whispering amused, the demon general scatters away the red attack with one hand. The figure of Hibiki wielding a sword clad in red is now in sight. In that clash of powers there wasn’t a single wound in his arm. This was prove of the difference in firepower between Tomoki and Hibiki.

“Did I make you wait? If the one that came here before

me did something impolite I apologize but…” (Hibiki)

Maybe he was not taking into consideration the male hero from just a few moments ago anymore, with a ferocious smile in his face, the figure of him waiting for Hibiki’s arrival was truly imposing.

“Nah, he was a really hyuman-like hero. Because even when words got through, it was impossible to establish a conversation” (Four arms)

Severe sarcasm.

“It annoys me that you think that is the obvious reaction a hyuman would have” (Hibiki)

“Then you prove it. However, it won’t be with words, but with your skills” (Four arms)

Against the giant that puts his fists on the front, Hibiki looks at his face and prepares her bastard sword.

“Of course, I will do so. I am Limia Kingdom’s hero, Otonashi Hibiki” (Hibiki)

“Well, well, how polite. I am the demon army’s third group general, the demi-giant Io” (Io)

The demon general that had his eyes wide open for a second because of Hibiki’s self-introduction, returns it with his own introduction.

“We may be outnumbered, but still, we will win. Even if we look like this, we were able to drive away the calamity after all” (Hibiki)

“The spider huh. I have heard the report. It seems you guys are quite capable. Also, outnumbered is a misunderstanding. I promise I will be the only one fighting the hero and her party” (Io)

“?! Wait, he has one arm burned off and he still says that?” (Hibiki)

Looking at the charred arm that is probably unable to be used at all, the girl stops her movements from the surprise.

“N, ah, this isn’t even worth calling handicap. Fuhm” (Io)

Small cracks appear in the charred arm. With one swing of it, that charred skin was brushed off and an arm appeared as if nothing had happened.

“… Is that the so called, high-speed regeneration?” (Hibiki)

“That’s right. Well, it is not in the absurd level of the black spider, so I might not match expectations though” (Io)

“You have made me remember an unwelcomed memory. Also, it seems you know quite a lot and set up such a trap!” (Hibiki)

“This time I had a lot of things pushed onto me so. I am not fighting just for myself here. That trap was the idea of the fox woman that calls herself tactician” (Io)

The scorn of Hibiki is answered by Io with apologetic words. The regeneration ability is not something he obtained to pester but something he was born with and

the plan was planned by someone else.

He himself likes to fight fair and square by clashing their abilities. He is a warrior from the core after all.

“Are you telling me the one who holds the responsibility is someone else? Isn’t that dirty?” (Hibiki)

“Fufufu, are you provoking me? It’s not like I am trying to escape the responsibility. Also, I am planning on becoming a hero by defeating thousands of hyumans you know? There is no need for me to let achievements slip my hands. If I obtain subordinates by climbing in ranks, I end up unable to fight in the way I desire. That is the only thing I wanted to say” (Io)

Letting Hibiki’s words slip, Io shows the simple but good quality ring on his thick finger.

“What? An engagement ring?” (Hibiki)

“No no, what a funny joke. I am single. This is one of the things I said before, something that was pushed onto me. They told me to use it to snipe the hero. Right now the two of you should be in range, a nice time to use it. *Ghjkop \ kkjjgf*” (Io)

With the unknown words he used as a signal, the ring crumbles as if made of clay.

“… What?” (Hibiki)

The strength in her body feels like it is seeping away. The strengthening that she obtained with the blessing, she felt like it was coming out from her body. Not only that, the wolf that was by her side protecting her, became dim and

disappeared.

“Hoh. It really showed effect. With this I can finally see our world coming to fruition” (Io)

The giant, seeing the wolf vanish, opened his eyes wide and makes a satisfied smile.

“What… did you do?” (Hibiki)

“I tried… erasing the blessing of you guys. It seems to only work for a limited time though. I was holding my breath, but it seems to have worked. What a splendid result” (Io)

“You blew away the God’s power with that one ring?!” (Hibiki)

“It has a crazy cost and it’s disposable. An incomplete product that is barely able to be of use in limited situations. Anyways, having something like a 4-times curse, do you really think we would just stay biting our fingers? First of all, did you think we were halved in this fight? I am sorry to say this but, we have already made countermeasures for your curse. To plan thinking you are fighting the same opponent as 10 years back, not even a fool would do that you know?” (Io)

“Uh” (Hibiki)

That’s true. If I were to be affected by a 4-times curse, I would try to do something about that first, is what Hibiki thought as well.

“Now, Hibiki and the others. Let’s begin. Please show me the power of a hero. Show me that it is a power that can

reach the Demon Lord!” (Io)

A truly elated voice resounds in the battlefield.

Hibiki and Naval advance as an answer. In a distressing situation where one would normally retreat, the fight of the demon general and the hero began.

—

“Hibiki, what is that girl doing?!”

The impatient voice of Tomoki is heard from the top of the dragon flying in the battlefield.

His body had suddenly become heavy. It felt like his body had become even heavier than before, like a limiter had been put on himself. But what is important is not that. The problem is that the spear and boots as well as the armor were not showing any reaction.

The necklace that is being used as storage can be activated. But everything else showed practically no reaction. The armor that he could barely feel any weight from and had showed numerous defensive effects, had now become a mere heavy armor. When this happens, even the rubber suit that he had on as a foundation felt uncomfortable.

Practically every single weapon he called from his ring showed no reaction. The only thing that showed a response was a thin sword.

For him who is not suited at close quarter combat, this equipment was pointless. It wasn’t a weapon one could use when in a mounting state anyways.

The one responsible for this irregularity is probably that demon general. In that case, it means this was caused by Hibiki's ineptitude.

(Is the power of the goddess sealed?! Is it okay for an opening boss to have this kind of power?! Or more like, if I can't use the power that the Goddess gave me, then isn't… the demon eyes in trouble as well?! I have to escape from this place as soon as possible!) (Tomoki)

But Tomoki who had thought until that point, notices an important reality. That if the Goddess' divine protection has been lost, the most important condition has been lost as well. Tomoki looks at the sky.

(Don't tell me, could it be, could it be, could it be! The immortal state is also canceled?!) (Tomoki)

Blood rushes to Tomoki's head.

This is no joke. If that is really the case, the point of choosing night would turn meaningless. It is because even if things turn to the worse, he still had this immortality to rely on. That's why he accepted to participate in this wide-scale operation.

He wasn't sure, but with reasoning was enough. The fact that he might die with just a stray bullet in his current state.

The fear of death begins to take control of him.

(No good, if I stay in this kind of place I will die! But if I were to get agitated and go back… At any rate, the affection points that I had painstakingly racked up, if I were to retreat now… Well, no matter. If I am released

from this state, I will be able to get them back anytime. Even Nagi, if it were to die, I just have to capture a new one. I have to retreat even if by force!) (Tomoki)

Being unknown to death, he had obtained equipment of the highest class and had behaved strongly in the battlefield. Even if his level is high, he hadn't experienced the death and life situations that fit that experience. This kind of reaction was no surprise.

Up until now, when he thought there was a chance for him to get shot, he would only come out at night when the moon is out.

"Tomoki, what's wrong?" (Ginebia)

"Ginebia, the situation has changed! We are going to return as soon as we can to where Lily is!" (Tomoki)

Ginebia, who was concerned about Tomoki, was repaid with a yell.

"B-But what about Hibiki and the others? And everyone from the Empire? I think if it's just cover, we can still do so safely" (Yukinatsu)

"Shut up Yukinatsu! I am worried about Lily's safety, I have a bad feeling. Anyways, just hurry! Nagi, hurry up!" (Tomoki)

A lie. The thing about Lily and about having a bad feeling. Right now he was only praying for his own safety.

"Onii-chan?" (Mora)

Losing her words because of the sudden change, Mora simply mutters. This is the first time she has seen such a side of him.

Seeing Tomoki, who has begun talking about returning as if he had lost his mind, the three companions began having doubts. But those three had already accepted his order of retreating once, even if he has become impatient and forceful, there is no way they can decline at this point.

“Hurry! We are going to leave this place!” (Tomoki)

“U-Understood. Nagi, we are going all out! Do your best!” (Mora)

“No helping it. It doesn’t seem like we can fight until Tomoki calms down anyways. Ginebia, I am counting on you. Aaah geez! I will also prepare myself to go in the red by doing a giant release of golems and replicas!” (Yukinatsu)

“Roger!” (Ginebia)

The three, who were basked in the demon eyes close to the level of being prisoners, were now released from that curse temporarily but all of the effects piled up until now tied up their bodies. Just as how Tomoki planned, all of that piled up love is now binding them.

While Hibiki and Io’s fierce battle continues, Gritonia’s hero overtakes the enemy lines and heads to the Empire’s camp, to the tent where Princess Lily is waiting.

If they can at least pass the enemy lines, there won’t be other obstructions. It seems that even though the demon

army was deployed at the rear of the united army, they haven't reached the point of controlling it yet.

The time needed to reach the campground they sortied out from wasn't that long.

"Tomoki-sama, so you were alright! Ah, what a relief!"

While being injured, Nagi was finally able to arrive at the destination and because of all the fatigue it didn't even fold its wings and just fell to the ground. Seeing the hero that got down from it, Lily quickly ran to his side and while giving him a hug, she gave words of happiness at his return.

Tomoki, released from the grasps of death, loses his strength in relief. Sweat came out all at once and his body couldn't stop trembling.

"Princess, to have let such an error occur, please forgive me!" (Ginebia)

Ginebia falls onto her knees and apologizes at the princess that continued her hug. Promising victory at their departure and then returning by themselves, just how unsightly this is.

"Ginebia, arrange the report of the situation. Come to my tent. Someone, come and take care of Mora's dragon. It is incredibly exhausted. Mora, thank you for saving everyone" (Lily)

"Tte, wait! Isn't there anything for me?!" (Yukinatsu)

Yukinatsu. Seeing the princess giving out prompt instructions but not being mentioned anywhere,

Yukinatsu did a tsukkomi even when the other party is a princess. It was an act that proved their close relationship.

“Yukinatsu, looking at your state, it seems you have done quite the expense. But for you to choose your comrades over money makes me really happy. If you give me the full list of what you used, I will bear full responsibility of it so rest assured. Go and take a most deserving break” (Lily)

“Expenses in these dangerous situations don’t matter. More importantly, in this situation what we need right now is someone that can see the whole battlefield and give clear instructions. Can you do it?” (Yukinatsu)

Yukinatsu looks serious and Ginebia lifts her head and agrees.

“I understand. That is why I came. In the end we ended up going back immediately though. Tomoki-sama let’s return. Please tell me what happened as well” (Lily)

Lily glances at the battlefield. And soon turns her body and returns to the campground.

While hearing the report from Ginebia, Lily soothed Tomoki, cheered, comforted, healed. She also confirms the situation of the battle from his mouth.

(It completely became a losing fight huh. In that case, no matter what kind of damages the empire receives, what’s important is to withdraw. Luckily the Kingdom’s hero seems to still be fighting, so let’s have the Kingdom’s army work as our shield. The Kingdom’s strength will

also be chipped, so two birds with one stone. Thinking about it, if the Limia hero dies here, the future would become much easier for me but… this would be too greedy. Our hero somehow managed to return without breaking and we have understood a bit of the demon race's moves and tactics. As a harvest, this is enough. It was originally fine if we didn't win anyways, so let's leave it at this. Also, the empire right now should be… Fufufufu) (Lily)

"Tomoki-sama, you have gone through a lot. Because of my own lack of ability in information gathering I have made you pass through such a harsh time. I am truly sorry!" (Lily)

"Lily. It's fine, even Limia didn't know anything. More importantly, should I have acted together with the Limia hero? With the two of us, the chances to win might have been higher" (Tomoki)

"No! The stupid one is that mockery of a hero, Hibiki. The existence called hero gives hope by living. To die for the sake of relieving her own satisfaction is just abandoning her duty. Tomoki-sama is a special one, if you were saved by the sacrifice of thousands of soldiers, it would still be cheap. It was the right decision. Please have more confidence in yourself" (Lily)

"… I see. You are right! If I die nothing will come out of it right?! Thanks Lily, I will have more confidence and I will become even stronger!" (Tomoki)

"Yeah, get as strong as you want. Lily will always be at your side Tomoki-sama" (Lily)

(If the Goddess' divine protection is suppressed, in the current state, there is almost no worth in using "this". Seeing the compatibility of sorcery tools he has, I think it is better to increase the amount of items that have as much use. Having weapons stacked inside the ring storage that he doesn't even use would just get in the way anyways. How troublesome. That pathetic sight he showed this time is out of the question. The clean up will be such a pain. Being blessed with such an environment and having that equipment as well as level, he still shamefully trembles. The hero the Goddess gave us is seriously thrash) (Lily)

She deeply embraces Tomoki once more. While having a slight cold shine reflected in her eyes that the other three companions don't have.

(The empire soldiers that personally saw our hero's pathetic figure are mostly dead already. In the case they return, we make them experiment materials. Doing that, the result will be the same. We will obtain silence. The guns tend to explode a lot and to complete them we need a lot of people after all. No matter how many we have, it won't be a problem. For Stella, we will let it sleep for three months… No, around half a year. Even if this was part of their plan, it's still true that we were able to assault the outsides of the gate. If our side manages to talk smoothly, we should be able to buy that amount of time) (Lily)

Lily arranges her thoughts.

Stella Fort recovery plan failed. Using the Limia hero that decided herself to hold back the enemy, the Empire troops withdraw from the front. The Kingdom's army

wait for their hero to escape and work as a rear guard while retreating. Barely escaping from the demon race's dirty trap, the Gritonia hero apologizes to the citizens and promises a comeback.

This being the result of the current strategy, the princess concludes and controls the truth of the information her own army should know. Getting in contact with the Kingdom's officers, they decide on the process of their retreat.

With the information in disarray and not being able to contact the front lines at all, the information of Gritonia hero being the only one who returned was used as a weapon by the princess and, manipulating in the shadows, the results came out instantaneously.

The actions of Hibiki backfired completely. The information that the hero directly brought out weren't lies, is what the Empire's princess made them think and the Limia officers that received this information, while crying and giving praises to Hibiki's decision, happily accepted the task of being the rear guard. Not only that, one unit of young people stood up and asked permission to rescue her which the superior officer gave his authorization. Princess Lily, maybe because she didn't consider this as anything that would bring trouble to her plans or because if she denies them she would bring doubts, only cried tears and gave praises at their bravery before departing.

Thus, by the time the sky was turning gray, the united army's retreat began.

Chapter 72: Furtherafter

“It’s morning huh. You guys really persisted” (Io)

“When cornered, anyone would show power surpassing their limits” (Hibiki)

The surplus-filled words of Io were answered by Hibiki with a reckless shout while dodging attacks.

“That is wrong. Being able to show power surpassing your limits only happens when you have properly grown and trained. You guys are truly skilled warriors. It seems I was misunderstanding the hero a great deal” (Io)

The compliments that came out indifferently from his mouth.

3 meters, from a normal person’s point of view this could be called quite the height. Using this body so agilely, he showed feats that would make first rate martial artists grief.

“Power-type trunk” was quite the misconception. Hibiki felt hatred from the bottom of her heart at the idiot that made such an analysis. These were movements of someone that has polished his body.

A giant that one wouldnormally think would usean axe or stick on his various arms and mindlessly swing them around. The real thing was completely different.

“The attacks don’t hit properly! This guy has a worst disposition than the spider!” (Naval)

Naval's scream. This is true. The flashes that she has been releasing have not passed properly as attacks after all. Since the beginning, the attacks of her have gotten his arms from different angles a number of times, but not even his skin was scratched. Moreover, he won't let attacks on the same spot reach. He deftly shifts and with some kind of method, he makes the edge slide off his hardened skin.

"Don't self-depreciate yourself that way, white woman. Even though it is powerless, it is truly a splendid sword technique" (Io)

"Are you pretending to be a martial arts instructor?! Gu wu wu!!" (Bredda)

Bredda goes to where Naval is and jumps to divert the trajectory of one of his arms' attack.

"An instructor huh! That sounds nice. People like you that can take my attacks for so long are rare. How about it? Want to come to the demons side? Tto" (Io)

Io uses a step that makes it look like he shiftedhis body's direction in an instant to change his position. In the space he was previously in, a something made out of magic power passes by.

"Why are you able to dodge invisible wind?! Can you read the aria?!"

"That's wrong, wind user. If one knows how much magic power is put in it, one is able to read most of the attacks that come. The place it is aimed at and the place it will activate, your eyes tell me that information" (Io)

This could be called an action brought by his enormous amount of experience. No matter if he says it, there wouldn't be many who would be able to actually do it.

"I will have you let us move forward once and for all!" (Hibiki)

"!! Nicely done!" (Io)

Because of Hibiki's sharp charge, Io is somewhat pushed back. But it wasn't like Hibiki had reached the levelof a demon general, it is just that his pre-established settings of her true abilities were beginning to be surpassed, that's all.

To surpass the estimation of a general with vast amounts of experience is not something a normal person could do, but this was only a slight surprise for him.

A definite feedback is felt from Hibiki's hands. The feeling of her sword reaching to her bones. Hibiki's sword was able to slice one of Io's hands till the middle.

"Oh, admirable. But how do you plan on surpassing the next barrier, hero?" (Io)

"… I can't take it out?!" (Hibiki)

"If I tighten my muscles, you won't be able to take out your sword. And so, your movements will stop as well!" (Io)

"!!"

Hibiki understood what would happen after this.

She instantly separates from her sword. This is an action stemming from Hibiki's trust of her instincts.

A dull sound. This was the first attack she had received in this battle. Moreover, this is the first attack she received since she came to this world that didn't have a single divine protection from the Goddess.

Hibiki flies like a pebble being kicked off. Chiya runs after her at once.

"Ga-ha!! U… go ho… wu…" (Hibiki)

(It hurts! It hurts! It hurts! It hurts!) (Hibiki)

Hibiki's thoughts get dyed in one color. Is this the effect of losing the Goddess' divine protection? For a moment, Hibiki thought this way.

(Hurts hurts hurts! But! Not having the Goddess' divine protection doesn't matter that much! Because I was able to move with not much change. The problem is him, Io. He is just way too strong!) (Hibiki)

Being almost controlled by the sense of pain, she tries to manage, even if for a bit, her reasoning. Think. For now just think. And so, Hibiki, for the sake of returning to her senses, continues to think while squirming.

(Even my bones are broken. What was punched was my stomach huh. To hit the stomach of a woman, how ungentlemanly. It seems there is a need to punish him. Ah, my mouth is filled with the taste of blood. It feels like it is coming from my throat. So lucky there is magic in this world. In normal circumstances I wouldn't be able to eat food tonight, but with healing magic I can even go

for meat. I am lucky) (Hibiki)

With her still disarranged thoughts, she tries to avert herattention from her wounds. It seems that the self-recovery magic that was activated in the moment was steadily showing effects, her pain was slowly softening. Having Chiya's healing magic on top of it, both spells synergize and accelerate the healing speed.

While still being unsteady, Hibiki stands up after a short while.

"At that instant you let go of your sword and, even if imperfect, you were even able to put out a barrier huh. I shot that one with the expectations of making you mincemeat though. Truly well done. You have genius-level sense" (Io)

"How will you compensate if I end up unable to bear a child? And also, mincemeat you say, how gore. Don't joke around!" (Hibiki)

"What a lively girl. Have your sword back. It may be a pointless thing for you to do but, how about trying to look for a better sword?" (Io)

Hibiki receives the sword that was thrown out. Of course, the sword wound in his arm was nowhere to be found anymore.

"… When tomorrow comes, I will listen to your advice" (Hibiki)

As usual, the words that showed no sense of tension were somehow returned with impudent talk.

“If you guys live to see tomorrow, you will have a place to return. Those two premises are impossible” (Io)

“?!”

The demon general’s nonchalant words. However, pointing out their place to return, Hibiki and the others uniformly open their eyes wide.

“Oh, so you get surprised as expected. Right now a detached force is advancing to Limia” (Io)

“Don’t mess around! There is no way the capital will fall with a single unit!” (Bredda)

Bredda is the first one to object. For the demon race to defy with one unit, there is no way Limia Kingdom would fall so easily. Knowing that the fires of war were approaching his birth place, his appearance clearly changed.

“You are right. The scale is around two thousand. In normal circumstances, this is not a force that can be used to attack a major power’s capital” (Io)

In Io’s words one could feel pity. He sighs. While affirming Bredda’s words, the latter half stirred up anxiety.

“What did you do?” (Wudi)

For Wudi, whose family is in the capital, these words felt like someone pouring cold water on him while sleeping. For him who wants his family as far as possible from this war, something that should not happen at any cost is about to happen.

“Magician huh. Well, it’s just that I have reliable reinforcements that’s all. A power that can even overwhelm me is accompanying me” (Io)

“Is the demon army a jack-in-the-box? If there are people like you crawling all around, the hyumans would have been annihilated a long time ago” (Hibiki)

Hibiki’s sarcasm. But her words didn’t show any composure.

“Hero. That’s just how desperate we are. Now, let’s close the curtains of this act. I will not forget you guys’ bravery. Driving away the spider with only 5 and being hyumans to top. The fact that all of you came out alive tells that your strength is the real thing. There was a time when my best friend and I tried to make it retreat, but I ended up letting him die. A blunder of the young me, I truly regret it” (Io)

“?!”

He doesn’t answer Hibiki’s words, he just declares the finale of this fight. Also, the driving away of the calamity spider that worked as an emotional support for Hibiki and the others, Io points out that this wasn’t an experience they alone had achieved.

It seems there was quite the effect. A clear unrest spreads in the hero’s party. Words that hinted Limia’s ambush and that he had repelled the spider. There is no way Limia’s hero and her party would not get shaken from this.

(… I am thoroughly naïve. If I do an effort of 10, I will

certainly get a 10. Thinking that, I came. I am putting my life on the line here. I should have tried my best by 100, 1,000, 10,000 times! I should have done that!) (Hibiki)

What can she do in this despairing situation?

Defeating Io and saving the capital. As expected, she could clearly declare this; that it is totally impossible.

Not enough. The power needed is absolutely not enough. For Hibiki, this was the frustration she was originally looking for. This was the step after desperate effort that Hibiki longed for. Therefore, obtaining this, her answer was obvious. No good.

Having sweat on her cheeks and hair over her face was simply irritating for her. The girl that tried her best and still lost. That was exactly the wish Hibiki had, but the girl began to understand what comes after in that path.

That's right. The reality of what will happen after a hero loses. The girl, Otonashi Hibiki, began to understand the reality of her existence being a center of hope. Her defeat is not limited to only herself anymore.

At times, there are fights in the battlefield that one simply cannot lose. Being raised in a peaceful land, Hibiki, who had thought this was just a fight in a different world, began to see the reality in it. That she couldn't continue thinking as she has until now.

A feeling of defeat that was not on the level of when she was defeated by the black spider was now enveloping Hibiki. For the time being, the whole party was still in a condition that can still fight. But the fact that they don't

feel they can win, slowly breaks their heart.

“!!”

Far.

At a distant place.

In the direction where the Limia capital is in.

A golden light of giant magic power proportions splits apart the clouds and pierces the ground.

Of course, this was a happening that occurred in a faraway place. This was a phenomenon that one could see with their eyes, but to estimate the amount of magic power that light had was something Hibiki and the others couldn’t do from their location.

The only thing they could tell was that an intense pillar of light appeared, and it was golden in color.

But what happened? It was a situation that only rolled into the bad side. Hibiki tries to forcefully put her mind together.

“What is that?!” (Io)

It seems Io also didn’t expect this to happen. This made them feel a bit better and they could still hope for the better. The words of dismay that the demon general showed for the first time, sounded like music to Hibiki’s ears.

“That may be a plan to reverse things. Everyone! Just for a bit more, let’s struggle!” (Hibiki)

“I will accompany you!”

“Of course!”

“My magic power is not dried out yet anyways!”

“I’ll do my best!”

Of course, there is no way they have such a convenient reversal plan. Everyone understood this.

But even so, the companions that answered the encouragement won’t surrender till the bitter end. This is the strongest weapon that Limia’s hero and her companions possessed.

(Wudi-dono, I am sorry. Can you give me a bit of your time?)

(Naval-dono, what is up?) (Wudi)

Receiving a thought transmission from the girl that was standingwith her blade beside Hibiki, Wudi responds without breaking his concentration. A contact from Naval,something thatone could count in one’s hands, surprised Wudi.

(This situation… there might be a way to escape from it) (Naval)

(What?! So you need my cooperation for it right?) (Wudi)

(Yeah. I… can’t ask this of Chiya) (Naval)

(… Let’s hear it) (Wudi)

(I am a vanguard that against sturdy opponents can only

do the job of getting its attention. I have low attack power. Even though I tried to look for a strong weapon, it is as you see) (Naval)

Naval continues her movements just like before, dodging Io's attacks while attacking. Seeing her attacking the parts where his defense looks weaker continuously, one couldn't feel the weakness of her words.

(I think putting a demon general as the basis is a bit of a rash self-evaluation though) (Wudi)

(No. I myself understand this. But for the weapon searching I have troubled myself so much with to be useful here) (Naval)

(What are you trying to say?) (Wudi)

A conversation held out while Wudi is providing support as well as attack magic. The two of them, without breaking their concentration in battle, were continuing their thought transmission. A show of how much ability they possess, proficientpeople.

(Yeah, I got my hands on a secret plan that will explosively increase one's strength. And a method to obtain immense attack power as well. It is sad that both of them can only be used once) (Naval)

(… Naval-dono that is…) (Wudi)

(A magician like Wudi-dono may already know of it. The fragment of a rose, Rose Sign, and a death god's note, *Deadly Word*; is what they are called. Quite the amount of magic power is needed to prepare its activation and it is something I can't use, but it is

something you should be able to easily accomplish) (Naval) <She got a Death Note paper! RUN>

(I refuse. Such a method, Hibiki-dono would not approve of it either) (Wudi)

(There is no need to tell me, I know Hibiki would be against the idea. But, you understand right? That the escape of the hero is something that has to happen. In a sense, the decision of Tomoki-dono is more adult than Hibiki's) (Naval)

(Guh! That is, certainly true…) (Wudi)

The hero, Otonashi Hibiki, is an existence that must not be lost. Even if one takes away the battle power as a hero, that charisma and way of thinking, and in times their casual words that one can obtain ideas from, all of those are things that the Kingdom needs.

(That's why, I ask of you. I want you to please let me save Hibiki. You also want to live and reunite with your family right?) (Naval)

(?! Those words… that is underhanded Naval-dono. … Which one are you planning on using?) (Wudi)

(Thanks! Since it is like this, I want to use both. Fighting with the Rose to the bare limit and then finish it with the Death God) (Naval)

(The… two. You have resolved yourself up to that point? … Okay, I will use my all to help you. When given the signal, I will take everyone immediatelyand show you how I shake off the soldiers at a speed so fast that won't even let them react to it) (Wudi)

(So you were already aware of my last request huh. I am grateful. Truly… grateful) (Naval)

Taking the chance when she avoids the giant's attack, Naval moves to the back of where Bredda is positioned in.

"Sorry, Hibiki, Bredda. I have thought of a trifling plan so, is it okay to leave it to me?" (Naval)

"Naval! If you are saying this and leavingus two to fightagainst this monster, it must mean you have quite the confidence right?!" (Hibiki)

"Merciless, this lady is merciless!" (Bredda)

Of course, the two of them spit out complains one after the other. Their faces were filled with expectation, so they were not truly against the idea. Naval smiles at the behavior of both. For the girl that almost never smiles, this was an unusual happening.

"Just for a bit, I am counting on you guys!" (Naval)

Naval falls back to the rear where Wudi and Chiya are. Wudi had a strained and resolved expression. Chiya had a pure face filled with motivation. Naval, seeing both of their faces, smiled gently.

"Wudi-dono, please" (Naval)

She takes out an earth-colored object the size of a coin from the bag hanging at her waist. It was a form that seemed as if the so called "Rose of the Desert" had become smaller.

Next, a single note. It had thickness, and in the material that could make one think it is cloth, a pattern is engraved.

Seeing the two items taken out, Wudi lowered his brows and sighed deeply. Because the two items were the real deal.

“U-Uhm! What should I do?” (Chiya)

Chiya wasn’t able to understand the situation and asked the two people that had faces as if they knew everything.

Even though she is still young, she is still able to pay attention to the two comrades that have been left to deal with the giant while she talks. Chiya herself still didn’t know but, this is quite the growth.

Hibiki, knowing her hair was going to get in the way, cut it short. She learned about the sword from Naval and magic from Wudi. Seeing that sister-like existence, Chiyatried her best in her own way for the sake of walking beside that person forever. Continuously experiencing the battlefield, Chiya had grown well.

“Chiya… is okay. Just concentrate on those two” (Naval)

“No. Chiya, do your best inproviding support to Naval-dono. Cast a strong spell that you won’t need to reapply for a long while” (Wudi)

“U-Understood!” (Chiya)

“… W-Wudi-dono” (Naval)

“Now then, next is the Rose Sign huh. How are you going

to sneak the note on him?" (Wudi)

"I will coil it around the handle" (Naval)

"Then let's fix it as well. You remember the activation key right?" (Wudi)

"As expected, that would be no joke. There's no problem" (Naval)

Maybe he was trying to soften the mood a bit, the party's magician smiled and made a light question which was returned with a wry smile.

"… I wasn't saying that with the intention of a joke though. If you are heading to a once in a lifetime stage, you must worry about those small things just in case" (Wudi)

Magic power flows from Wudi's hand and the earth-colored item that was in Naval's hand dissolved into a liquid state and gets absorbed inside of her.

The support magic that was filled with Chiya's fighting spirit had also finished casting.

Naval, sensing power flooding her body, her shoulders tremble. In the beginning she thought it was because of the efficacy of Chiya's support magic, but this power that knows no bounds, ignoring the comfortableness of the user, this violent-like power is not something that this small girl's magic possesses.

"I have confirmed the activation. Start" (Wudi)

The business-like and firm voice of Wudi reaches the ears

of Naval. There was no need to tell her, her eyes were already facing the battlefield, at Io.

Her white hair flows in the wind and the back of her neck is revealed. At both sides of her neck, something was there. The pattern of a crimson-colored rose.

“… Rose Sign. Something that I didn’t want to see on a friend if possible” (Wudi)

“… Wudi-dono, this is my wish. Don’t make such a face. Then… I’m going!” (Naval)

From the whole body of the running Naval, a dim radiance is being released. In that figure that would normally be seen as beautiful, Wudi looks at it in pain, as if wanting to cry.

“Uhm… What was the plan?” (Chiya)

“It’s something like the preparations for a sure-kill technique” (Wudi)

“Incredible! Naval-san could use such a technique?!” (Chiya)

Seeing the innocent happiness of Chiya, Wudi stops kneading his magic for a bit and looks at the sky.

“… Yeah. A one-time use” (Wudi)

He whispers.

That voice dissolving into the darkness.

Chapter 73: Decision In Stella

“W-What?!”

The swordswoman that had fallen back had now returned, her body clad in radiance.

The attack that Io used as a feint was evaded in a speed that was clearly at a completely different level from before and, just like that, her sword travels to his flank.

Tightening his abdominal muscles, the attack that was repelled until now had brilliantly cut the body of the giant and blood flowed.

“It can cut!”

“Naval, what kind of magic is that?! I will also go to the rear and have it casted on me as well!” (Hibiki)

“Hahaha, Hibiki that is impossible. This needs a special catalyst after all! Just obediently provide me support!” (Naval)

Naval stops Hibiki who was already trying to head to the rear.

“Wu wu, if you had such a trump card, you should have used it faster! You are sparkling and look beautiful too～” (Hibiki)

“We are pushing hard!”

The speed of Naval was originally higher than him. Even if Io’s strategy is to freely move his sturdy body with fluent body techniques, against the hyuman whose height

is different and excelled his speed, it was impossible to evade them completely. Now that her attacks were connecting properly to damage, the schema has made a complete reversal.

Keeping a distance not too far yet not too close, she coils about the demon general Io while one-sidedly cutting him.

There was no chance for Hibiki to intervene, Naval was dishing as much attacks as she wanted. With her speed, there was no chance to follow her and the wounds continued.

Compared to the regeneration, the speed in which he received wounds was faster. But at this rate, it will never reach a fatal wound. The wound she did at the beginning in his flank has already healed. If there is something she can aim for, it would be the weakening of his strength by lost of blood. As expected, things like neck, chest and stomach; he didn't permit her to aim at them.

Hibiki's two handed attacks leave shallow cuts. She is changing into a style where his muscles won't be able to catch her attacks. Putting slicing as her objective, she is moving in a way so the previous error doesn't occur again.

But in that turn of events there is one knight that had practically stopped parrying attacks or stopping them. He looked at the battle with a dazed expression.

"… That is… Rose Sign. Are you kidding me? Why does she have such a…" (Bredda)

It seems he had noticed something, he turned to the rear where Wudi is.

Wudi, who knew the position of prince that Bredda possessed, could only turn his eyes away.

No one in the party except Wudi knows, about Bredda holding the position of prince. Because of that, there were a lot of chances where he obtained information other people would be unable to touch. In that information, there was also the reason as to why Naval was able to change this situation into an advantageous one.

A fragment of a rose, Rose Sign.

Its size is on the level of a coin, but in reality it is one of the magic items that holds terrifying power.

It's a one-time use item and, when used, the pattern of a crimson rose will appear at the back of your neck. This is also one of the reasons for its name.

Its effect is simple. It uses life as foodand forcefully brings out power. When it is born, it will slowly consume you until your death and will greedily devour that power you will never be able to recover. And so, it will provide the user with strength surpassing one's limits.

The effective time is until that person dies. It is by no means a long time. That is to say, in exchange for a power that the user will never be able to obtain in his entire life, your death is set in stone.

"Calling such a thing… a plan? Naval, you are…" (Bredda)

A pure swordswoman like her can't activate it. Bredda understands that. His thoughts reach at the conclusion that it must be Wudi or Chiya that cooperated with her.

(It is most likely Wudi. If it were Chiya, she wouldn't be cheering so merrily for her. Is she going to such lengths to protect Hibiki-dono and I?!) (Bredda)

It is certainly not a situation where they could survive with the sacrifice of no one.

However, to take all the responsibility by herself and forcing her own death, it is something Bredda would never approve. The knight that faked his social position and joined the party, still didn't have the way of thinking a royalty should possess. Sometimes it is necessary to sacrifice someone. This reality is one that a politician can't avoid.

And actually, the effectiveness of Rose Sign is immense. Even in the present state, Io, who had been proving a difficult time for them, was now taking the defensive. He is someone that even with a handicap of 4-times blessing was still able to win.

"Ah, Naval! You must not, that attack is…!" (Hibiki)

There is no way to know if Hibiki's warning reached her. Naval, who had jump up to the air, swung her sword straight ahead and got the demon general's arm. And then, that sword continues unto its insides… and stops.

"I got you!" (Io)

Io wedged the sword and tightened his muscles. His opposite arm fires a powerful uppercut at Naval.

“Not yet!!” (Naval)

In midair, she puts her right hand on top of the left that is at the back of the sword’s handle and places force as if pushing her whole body. Naval, kicking the body of Io, uses that momentum to push the sword that had stopped in the middle and slices the bone and remaining meat.

The uppercut that was approaching her from below, Naval manages to put her feet on top of it and use that strength to propel her to the direction of the attack.

Io didn’t let out a single scream from having his arm cut off and didn’t stop his fist either. Nevertheless, one could clearly see that he was sweating and looking at his own arm that was now bleeding, he finally distorted his expression.

A blood spray that had never occurred was happening now.

“How scary, white woman. You said your name is Naval? Knowing an attack was coming and yet still greedily come to get my arm, moreover, kicking my fist and killing its power. Are you a monster of the sword?” (Io)

“For a demon general to call me a monster. It doesn’t feel bad. I now grasped the way to cut off your arms. If the arms that protect you are gone, it will be easier to make your head fly” (Naval)

Laughing fearlessly, she brushes off the blood sticking onto her sword. Her sword was already clad in a faint radiance and the white aura that she was releasing from inside her was steadily getting stronger. The shining aura

flows to all sides as if dancing and then disappears.

“So there’s a hyuman magic I don’t know right? Honestly, I am deeply surprised” (Io)

“Well, I am surprised as well. At your power that I can’t overwhelm even when going to such lengths that is. As expected from a 4-armed giant race. You are one of those we call genius huh” (Naval)

“… I was originally a normal 2-armed giant you know? What you cut off is not one of my original arms” (Io)

Io responds to Naval’s praise.

“At that time when we were attacked by the spider, I couldn’t save my best friend. When I managed to repel it with my wound-filled body, I returned with his arms and transplanted it on me. It took a lot of time until I was able to move them properly though” (Io)

“Well, that was impolite of me then. I am sorry but I will have to finish this. There is also a fox woman right? From the 4 demon generals you are the weakest one. We can’t take our time” (Naval)

The light that was coming from Naval’s body surpassed its peak and was now weakening.

Maybe she is self-aware of this or maybe not, she once again begins her offensive.

“I am the weakest? Fumu, it seems you guys are doing a weird labeling there. Why would a weak general come to the frontlines? In terms of battle, I am the strongest one of the demon generals. There’s no demon general that

can beat me in a one-on-one” (Io)

Against Naval’s fierce attack, Io limits himself to harden only the parts that he uses to guard and slowly manages to make them shallow. In these scene where blood is spraying here and there, Io seems to be calm, but in reality he is slightly reorganizing.

“That is good news then! If we manage to defeat you, we will be able to make a big step forward!” (Naval)

She didn’t even flinch at the words “strongest”. Naval goes full force at the demon general.

While handling the combo of fists, she puts force into the arm holding the sword and little by little, using full powered attacks, she maintains her distance while mobilizing.

In the middle of that, Naval does one step back and turns over her body. As if he had been waiting for this moment, she did just as Io planned.

(No good! Naval hasn’t noticed?!) (Bredda)

Bredda, who has been watching that fight with complex emotions, holds fears about Naval not being able to evade the next attack that is coming from the demon general.

It may be because Bredda receives attacks a lot, he is skilled at reading his enemy’s knacks.

This time, Io moved knowing that Naval would take her distance because she didn’t like how the situation was flowing.

“… A kick?!”

That’s right. Io hadn’t used a kick at all until now.

The distance it has is wider compared to a fist. The place where Naval is, is not a safe range anymore. She is within his range sphere.

In the space between them that she thought was safe, a fast kick that doesn’t fit the appearance of this giant was released. Avoiding it was impossible.

“You shouldn’t be careless!” (Io)

“Seriously!” (Bredda)

From the side of the released kick, a shadow appears.

Bredda, who had noticed Io’s prediction, moved to make a follow-up. From the front this attack is dangerous to defend, but attacking the leg from the side to shift its direction is something he can somehow manage. Bredda’s decision was correct.

Getting his kick’s direction shifted by an unexpected obstruction, of course, the balance of his body crumbles. Naval’s eyes shine with the desire to attack.

“I did it!” (Bredda)

Replacing the kick of Io, comes Naval. Her movements while spreading light powder were beautiful like a dance.

Io, who had read the aim of the girl accurately, leaves the arm that is supporting his body and uses the two remaining arms to protect his neck.

“I won’t get in the way! At this moment he isn’t even able to counterattack right?!” (Hibiki)

Hibiki forcefully cuts one of the arms of his and strikes his whole body. If it is at least cutting off one of the arms that are protecting his neck, it is possible.

“Hibiki, thank you!” (Naval)

Slipping through the arm that was left, Naval’s sword reaches Io’s neck.

“Nuu wu! Gu!!!”

She wasn’t able to make it fly off. It took her all to slip through his arm and release a punch.

But the sword of her, certainly got through his neck. The white radiance that was covering the sword was now shining faintly and only protecting Naval’s body.

The white swordswoman uses her remaining power to try and cut off his neck by placing force on the opposite side.

It doesn’t budge.

The sword that had gone through his neck didn’t move a centimeter.

“Praiseworthy. To think you would be able to do this much. I apologize for my impoliteness of thoroughly making light of you guys” (Io)

“… You bastard. That body is…” (Naval)

The purple skin of Io began to dye in pitch black.

“To think in this fight I would find an opponent I have to use my all” (Io)

The words of the black giant sent chills down Naval’s spine. The sword that had clearly reached to his throat by pressing all of the strength of both of her arms, was brushed to the side. The sword… broke.

Without minding that, she exchanged looks withHibiki and Bredda and took her distance from Io. He didn’t give chase.

The giant, with the sword’s edge still in his neck, stays standing.

“… This is a joke right? Are you telling me from now on its stage 2?” (Hibiki)

Hibiki’s words are blurred. Until now it has been already been a plenty strong opponent that they could hardly match and yet, he becomes even stronger. There is no situation more despairing than this.

“No way. To not even use all of his strength when fighting Naval in that state” (Bredda)

Bredda’s words were of mortification, a person that has been filled with despair.

“Sorry there” (Io)

Io silently prepares.

“Wudi!!!!” (Naval)

The words of Io were drowned by Naval’s yell and

resounds in the area.

Wudi, returning to his senses, quickly activates a spell he had prepared.

“Chiya, I will activate high-speed mobilization. Do a follow-up!” (Wudi)

“Y-Yes!” (Chiya)

The opened hands he placed to the front were retracted and tightly gripped at the same time. His eyes were firmly locked at Hibiki and Bredda. He didn’t look at Naval.

“Eh”

“Uah”

Both Hibiki and Bredda felt like they were pulled by something and were brought to Wudi’s side.

He closes his eyes. For the sake of reaffirming his determination.

An unexpected turn of events occurred, but he already accepted the predicted future he talked with her in the thought transmission.

The wide opened eyes of Wudi were only looking at the path the Gritonia hero took. There may be some soldiers blocking the way, but there is no doubt that is the place with less defenses.

He hoists his staff.

“Wai- Wudi?” (Hibiki)

He ignores Hibiki’s words.

On the contrary, with the spell activated on top of Chiya’s support, they retreat from the battlefield at a speed not seen before.

“Eh, Wudi-san! Naval-san is still!” (Hibiki)

“Chiya, you must not, at any cost, cut off the support” (Wudi)

“Wudi! What are you doing?!” (Hibiki)

“Bredda-sama. Please hold down hero-dono. I don’t mind if it is only for a short while” (Wudi)

Without hearing the opinions of anyone…

Wudi fulfilled his promise with Naval and used his magic at max power to bring the party outside the boundaries of the battlefield. The demon soldiers that touched the gentle green area that surrounds the party were cut into pieces, and coupled with their screams, they went at full speed. Even when they arrived where the Kingdom’s soldiers who were trying to save Hibiki were, they still didn’t drop their speed.

The moment the spell lost its effect, he didn’t speak a word and just fainted.

At the other side.

Io, who had understood the reason of Naval’s shout, ordered the soldiers to pursuit them. However, the party

passed through the battlefield at high speed and it was quite the difficult order to follow. The ones who followed this order faithfully were turned into minced meat, the arrows were broken and the spells were blocked and avoided.

“Wudi-dono, I am truly grateful” (Naval)

“This is your plan huh” (Io)

With a bitter-filled expression, Io asks the hyuman woman left.

“Yeah, that’s right. My trump card is a bit dangerous you see” (Naval)

Saying that, Naval puts up her stance with her broken sword. The radiance that was rising from her body was already hollow, and what was left only dispersed.

“I can’t see you able to fight anymore though. Even so, you will continue?” (Io)

The words of the giant were like a sigh that resounded in the place.

“Of course. I haven’t used my everything yet after all!” (Naval)

The light in Naval’s eyes were actually stronger even in this situation. Holding tightly her broken sword, she reduces her distance between Io.

“Are you wishing for an honorable death?!” (Io)

“My life would have mercilessly and worthlessly fallen in

the battlefield anyways!! I am able to decide my death place, I got a reason to die, and moreover, I am able to remain in the memories of an irreplaceable friend! For the death of the sword monster, this is a stage that is too good!" (Naval)

"Wha-"(Io)

Io was thinking Naval would evade his fist and advance to pointblank range. Seeing his prediction turn out completely different, he unconsciously voices out his surprise.

The demon general's fist… pierced the girl. It's an attack that anyone would be able to tell it is a fatal wound. Naval, who had a fist growing out of her back, just what was she expecting to do now?

The girl who was vomiting blood, raised the corners of her mouth.

"Come to me, Death Messenger" (Naval)

"?!"

Just before death, the whisper of Naval didn't reach Io's ears.

In an instant, the blue fire that spread out in his surroundings covered all his field of vision. The fire steadily converged onto him and her as if trying to surround them, turning everything that touched it into dust.

It wasn't the vivid sky blue that refreshesone's eyes…

It’s like the one you see after dusk, a dark and stagnant blue.

“This is… this is?!” (Io)

An ancestral magic that uses life as its price, is what Io concluded. Because she is a swordswoman, this possibility completely slipped from his mind. Now that the two who could use magic were gone, in a part of his mind he had set that there was no “magic” in her options.

Extremely high density blue flame balls were wrapping up Naval’s corpse and the black giant.

With an expression as if he would explode at any moment, he made himself smaller, and in the area, one could hear the shouts of Io. Maybe it took the increasing shouts of him as a signal, the blue flames showed a change.

In the moment they shone brightly, at the next instant, they created a large explosion.

The explosion was vast in range and the demons and hyumans aiming to retreat in the surroundings were caught in the blast.

A thunderous roar rules the entire area for a moment, a flame that burns the battlefield.

When the two of them vanished, a charred lump of something was left on the ground.

What was once Io.

With a form as if cowering, the charred body looked like a big rock.

Beside that rock, a blue skinned woman that appeared out of nowhere touched his hand.

She seemed like a demon, but in that face the horns that are their special trait are nowhere to be found. She had a slim figure and an extreme outfit that barely hid the most important parts.

She looked at the black lump with bored eyes.

“Io, wake up. You are not dead right?”

“…..”

“We still have the mending of the “Hades” so do it quickly. Even if we have concluded it beautifully, we still have to do the maintenance properly. Hey, wake up!”

The demon woman, who didn’t hold a sliver of doubt about his survival, kicks the black rock. It seems she was in a bad mood.

The scene where he showed Hibiki his regenerated charred arm, was once again reproduced but with his whole body.

“She did a good one on me, that woman” (Io)

“… As expected, you were still alive huh. To kill you would take quite a lot. Let’s return, we still have a lot to report after all”

“Yeah, go ahead first” (Io)

“Ah, is that so. Then return walking. To say such a cold thing even when I went out of my way to come and get you”

“… Naval huh. That name… I will remember it” (Io)

Io looks deeply emotive at the arm that was sliced by a single hyuman. The figure of the woman is nowhere to be found. Not only her body, even her sword and tools; everything turned to dust.

“Ah that’s right. The blitz attack on Limia Kingdom failed”

“What?!” (Io)

Hearing the unexpected words, Io’s voice gets rough. The actions of that woman called Naval were out of expectations, but the strategy as a whole should have been proceeding smoothly.

For the part he was the most confident to succeed to have failed, his reaction was natural.

“In the time you were turned into an ugly rock, a number of unexpected events occurred. And so, the other side failed. Later I will tell you the parts we could understand”

“That group of monsters… failed?” (Io)

“That’s right. Right now they are weak enough even we would be able to kill them. Just what in the world happened? If I were there accompanying them, I would have been able to see”

“I can’t believe it” (Io)

“Isn’t it just that in this world we don’t know what could happen? Even I, if these were how it ended, it wouldn’t be fun. If I knew this would happen, I would have killed the Gritonia Hero. The effect of the ring was instant on that side. He became a small fry in a breath”

The woman that was already flying in the sky, without hiding her bad mood, throws casually at Io words that could be taken as a monologue of her. Afterwards, he returned to Stella Fort alone.

Maybe he wasn’t perfect yet, he dragged his body while getting in contact with the soldiers and ordering them to clean up the remaining hyumans. And following the path the woman took, Io returned to the fortress.

Like this, the Stella Fort capture battle had ended.

Leaving a big wound on the hyumans…

And moving the world bit by bit.

Chapter 74: The Suffering Of The Golden One

Inside the dazzling light, I feel like I heard a voice I have heard before. The moment I tried to turn my attention to it, a softsensation enveloped my body.

There is also a floating sensation I didn't feel in the transfer formations at the other towns. Before I could grow vigilant, a strong light as if exploding, dazed me and I reflexively closed my eyes.

I waited until the sudden strong light weakened before I open my eyes. I didn't want to receive that flash-like light. It seems I was somehow able to protect my eyes, but I didn't know what was going on.

This is… where? It is clearly not a place I have seen before.

Is it a stream? A river is flowing in front of me. It has a bit of width, but it's a shallow river which I can see its bottom. If I feel like it, even without looking for a bridge, I would be able to cross just like this.

This is so sudden that I don't know what to do.

I certainly got on the transfer magic formation. Then this should be the inside of the next relay town. Yeah, thinking things through is important. Uh?

That thing I see in front of me… a mamono? There are also demons there. They are heavily armored and walking in a really imposing manner. What, what in the

world is…?

They are on the other side of the river. Since the river itself is pretty big, there is a relative amount of distance between us.

My breathing becomes shallower. I try to push aside this strange atmosphere for now. And then, I notice something.

I can feel presences at my back as well. I am scared, but if I don't see what it is, nothing can be done. I felt uneasy about turning my sight away from that strange-looking group, but I push those feelings aside and turn to my back.

Behind me there is a forest. In the spaces of the many trees, I could see the shadows of people. That equipment… the army?!

The people that I could see were mostly facing the other side. It looks like they are retreating, but I can see a number of them looking at this side. Are they scouting?

I don't know from which country's army they are from, but looking at their uniform equipment, they remind me more of the army than soldiers. At my back, a hyuman army; at my front, a demon army. Then does that mean… this is, this is… a battlefield?!

I am right in the middle of both armies?! EH?! How?! Why?!

I don't understand, I don't understand at all! I was with Shiki… That's right, Shiki. My servant. Where is he?

Of course, just noticing that Shiki is not by my side makes me feel a sense of crisis. This is bad. I am quite unsettled.

(Shiki! Shiki! Can you hear me? If you can hear me, I want you to please explain me what is happening!)

There is no response. Or more like, I can't feel it reaching. Is it being obstructed? Then…

(Tomoe? Tomoe! Can you hear me?!)

(Mio, it is me. Makoto! Can't you hear me?!)

No good. It feels like the call isn't even connecting.

To think I can't even get in contact with my servants. This is the first time something like this has happened. What should I do? For some reason I am in a battlefield-looking place and it seems they are currently not fighting, but it doesn't mean this place is safe. No, it is better to think this place is dangerous.

If the hyumans are retreating, the demons are chasing them, or so I think. If that is so, then this kind of river won't even serve as an obstacle. I don't think they are an army of *vampires* after all. What was it that stopped their advance? No, before that, why am I even here? From the Academy Town, there is quite the distance to the north before one reaches the war fronts. Are you telling me I have arrived to that north? <Vampires are said to be unable to cross running waters>

What I can think of is, that voice I heard when I was inside that transfer light. That was… the voice of the worst existence that I met when I first came to this world.

Goddess.

There is no way I would mistake that voice. No doubt it's her.

If I remember correctly, that bug said… "I found you" or something like that. Are you telling me after all this time she now has some business with me and called me?

But what is that business? I wasn't told anything. Well, even if I hear it, I don't plan on doing it though. There is no way that after treating me so badly she would come and say "become a hero" anyways.

To throw me in this situation so suddenly without any information, just what is going on? I can't read the thought patterns of a God. Especially when it comes to that self-centered idiotic Goddess!

Damn it. There is only questions popping up inside me. What should I do? How should I move?

?!

Wa?!

A bad feeling instantly runs through my back.

This is… blood thirst! And it is pretty precise!!

It resembles the one my sensei poured on me when she told me I should get used to it. The strength of the presence also!

The person that can show such an impressive power is in no way decent! It is the type of presence I tried not get

close to in my previous world.

From in front me. From the demons side, something is heading my way.

A human shaped one. Is it a demon? There is no doubt this one is strong. Or more like, scary.

Should I run to Asora? But I can't have that one enter as well. The time it takes for the gate to close after opening it, there is no assurance that onewon't plunge into it at that time. Tomoe said something about enclosing an opponent in a small airspace and one-sidedly attack it, however,using that ability is still impossible for me.

There is no choice but to probe huh. Oioi, you are kidding me right? Isn't that, a kid?

When I look closely, I can see that he is floating, his legs are not moving. A boy(?) with orange hair is heading my way at a pretty fast speed. Certainly, I feel the blood thirst from that kid. But it is a kid you know? It doesn't look like he is equipped with any exaggerated equipment. Both of his hands are empty too. If he were a magician, a staff would fit but… I can't see a single difference with him and the children I see playing at town.

From the place that innocent looking child is, I can feel that strong blood thirst I previously felt. Also the part about him floating.

Feeling nervous at the scent of the battlefield I have never felt before, it choked me. While feeling my breathing grow increasingly shallow, I watch the kid's actions.

As if it were natural, he had already reached until the middle of the river and without dropping his speed, he advanced to my location. *So there's no problems in crossing the river huh*. Is it settled that he has business with me? <he is referencing the vampire talk>

That means, the reason the demon army stopped its advance, could it be…

… Me?!

"Disappointing"

From my left, a sudden voice! A woman?!

No way! There is no one—?!

Sensing something closing in to my face, I lower my head and instantly cover it with my left hand. Immediately following, a dull and powerful impact. Without being able to confirm its identity, I was thrown by that attack.

Gu… wu wu.

This might be the first time since I came to this world that I feel a strong and clear pain. An attack I didn't expect to come. In the blow that was firmly packed with blood thirst, my body was sent rolling on the ground and after I stopped, a cloud of dust was created.

It hurts. The throbbing pain is coming from my head. If I instantly lowered my posture and it hit my head, it means… its aim was my neck?! The insistent *zukin zukin* pain throbs in my confused head without holding back.

My hand is burning. It must be because I tried to cover against that attack with my left hand. This one is going *dokun dokun*. It hurts… what is going on?!

While collapsed face up, I bring my left hand in front of my face. I was astonished.

“My fingers… half of them are gone” (Makoto)

Even though it’s my voice, it felt strangely distant. My middle and index finger are practically gone from the rootand a half is missing from the ring finger. Even though it is an emergency, I can’t seem to truly feel my current situation.

What… what is this?

Ah that’s right, I gotta get up! If I stay down, I won’t be able to do anything. I will be killed.

The bleeding also. Since I can’t heal myself, if I am not careful, I might die from blood loss. The random tools I had were mostly in my bag that is presently gone. What I have is… the bow that I use for training. I can’t be picky here. At any rate, I have to bandage myself first. The bow is not in a ready to use state anyways. There is no problems if they try to stop me.

Where should I begin tying from? For now let’s just randomly bandage beginning from my elbow. I should have gone to a short course for first aid.

“Heh～ you are not dead. As expected from a person called by the Goddess. To not be cut by this sword, just what kind of defense you have? That face… could it be you are a hyuman synthetic beast, a chimera?”

The woman voice states her amazement at me. Even if you voice out your admiration at my survival, it doesn't make me happy. Also, I am not a mixed product! Don't go mixing me!

"Sofia, even though *I* went out of my way to turn his attention to me. For you to not be able to finish him, that's not like you" <He uses Waga here, a really old way of talking>

It's that kid. He is using *"Waga". Damn it, a fantasy specialty. A character that one can't tell its age by its outward appearance huh.

"N? My attack connected perfectly. This sword isn't soft you know? This Mitsurugi" (Sofia)

I am still dizzy. I look at the person that is probably the one who attacked me. There is distance so, since my vision is blurry, I haven't confirmed the person properly, but it seems she is forming a *combi* with that kid. <Team of two>

Her bang is covering her right side, so I can only see one of her eyes. She has blue hair like Tomoe. This is a natural thing in this world, but her figure is well-built. On her body she has shoulder plates and a breastplate, also, protection in key points like knees and elbows. The other inner parts were barely covered by lightweight equipment. Her bottom part looks like she is wearing denim short pants. If it weren't in this situation and we were just passing by each other, I would probably have turned around and admired those beautiful legs.

Also, that giant sword. It's slightly bigger than her. Even so, in terms of length it's shorter than a long sword. That thing has quite the width so it makes you feel it is bigger than it really is. With one glance I can tell that it is not an ordinary weapon, it has an emerald green almost-transparent blade. So I was mowed by that sword and sent flying huh. I thought it was a blunt weapon though… Normally one would have his head or neck cut clean. I am glad at my own defense power from the bottom of my heart. Thank you magic power, thank you eldwas.

The barrier is only deployed when I am aware a battle will occur. That I lost my rings is my complete blunder. How shameful.

However, to have such a big object at hand while approaching me and I didn't notice. No way.

Are you telling me there is that much difference in ability, in experience? That's no joke.

"That is a swing I provided practically all of my power. There is no way it was insufficient" (kid)

"But I felt like I was hitting a giant metal lump when I attacked him. No matter if he is a letdown. There is no doubt he is a troublesome opponent" (Sofia)

This is bad. Bad. It is obvious that they still intent to continue. I can't help feeling like the lifted corners of her mouth looked aggressive.

What should I do? I can't call for help. I don't know where I am. The hyuman army at my back is beginning

their retreat for some reason. For a while now, the mamono army seemed like they were looking out for my actions or maybe the two over there, they didn't show signs of moving. At a glance, I feel like there isn't only a hundred or two hundred. A thousand, no, even more maybe.

But in my side… well, I have magic, so I will manage somehow. If I calm down I will be able to handle it. I should be able to do it.

Anyways, right now what I am clear about is that I can't take my eyes off those two. I have to make sure not to miss a single movement of them or I will definitely regret it. I don't have a mirror so I don't know the degree of my head's injury, but since there isn't that much blood flowing out, I won't mind it for now. And the bleeding of my hand has also calmed down a bit.

I am in the verge of falling into panic. First I should understand that point clearly and make sure not to really fall into panic, try to stop it.

I tell myself this.

There is only one way for me to return. Create a mist gate and escape. This is certain. I don't understand the current situation one bit after all. If possible, I don't want the Goddess to see me when I create the mist gate. In the worst case scenario I should do so without caring, but if possible I want to take as much distance from them first.

Even if my life is foremost, bringing these two to Asora is way too dangerous. Their strength is unknown, but it is certain that they are strong.

What is it you want to achieve you bug?! Are you telling me to get killed by these guys?!

Don't mess with me! Don't!

Even when I know I would definitely lose to the Goddess if I tried to fight her right now, my displeasure is overflowing. As expected, I am not confident I can win against a God in my current level.

Also, the fear I feel from these two. If someone told me they are the executioners send by the Goddess, I would believe it. Anyways, if earthlings are giving me a hard time, that means I am still not strong enough to fight against that bug huh.

Damn bug, I will definitely hit you!

Someday, definitely. Right now is the time to work for the sake of obtaining that someday.

The problem is that combi of young woman and kid. For now, the only ones that are clearly showing hostility are these two. The hyumans are escaping so it is fine not to pay them attention. I don't have the leeway to do so.

…

…

Right now, what I am aiming to do. Eliminate those two that are being an obstruction or pull awayfrom them, open a mist gate and return to Asora.

WhetherI can open the gate or not, I will confirm it after I have taken my distance first. A certain amount of time

is needed to erase all the remains of a closed mist gate. Opening it takes 30 seconds and to close it takes about the same amount of time.

I should be an out of norm existence in this world. That 1 minute of freedom, let's create it.

Sofia is at the demons side?! More reasons to join the demons :3

Chapter 75: Their Identities

Apologies, it seems I made a big mistake last chapter.

The fingers of Makoto were actually chopped off. Half of his left hand's fingers are gone and bleeding like hell. One of the reasons he isn't thinking clearly.

"Ara, the color of the clothes changed. Could it be a countermeasure for us? Even though you should not be a new recruit that has smelled the scent of war for the first time. You are quite the carefree Goddess errand boy huh"

I ignore the woman named Sofia and prepare myself for battle. I have fought dragons, spiders and skeletons; in terms of fighting I am a bit used to them by now. But against a human being is, as expected, different.

I am fine when dealing with people like Lime Latte who just know how to make creepy smiles, but I didn't expect I would fight against people that can create blood thirst resembling that of my sensei. If I can stay in the mental state I was when I killed that idiotic woman, would I be able to create that kind of blood thirst?

Even if I think about this and that, if I can't do it, there is no point. There is no need to imagine it, I am already in front of the very people that can achieve it. My head is in a mess and I can't think properly.

I changed the color of my coat into red. Behind me there is a forest. It is in my field of vision, but there is quite the distance. If I use the speed attribute, I might be able to shake them off and enter the forest. If it goes well, I will be able to withdraw from here! The red color also

increases my resistance against edged attacks, so it works as a countermeasure for that woman as well.

About the hyumans… in this occasion, I will ignore them. If casualties appear, go complain to your Goddess.

“It may be an act to make us lower our guard, don’t lose your concentration. See, he is trying to do something. I feel a radical magic power convergence” (kid)

I click my tongue internally at the words of the kid. So he can sense magic activation huh. Then that means there may not be much merits in doing voiceless arias.

Even so, to not move immediately, are they leisure or maybe just negligent? I hope they are just negligent.

I was a bit uneasy about using a one shot spell, so I did a chain activation on [Brid] balls and leave them at my sides, I create from 5 on 5.

I inserted keywords on the Brids to arrange a few things, but I am reaching my limit. I want to quickly go to Academy Town and learn new knowledge. Magic knowledge that can fill up the deep precipice of my understanding in magic in order to comprehend the book Shiki gave me.

“Take this!” (Makoto)

The moment I activated them, the balls are drawn to the limit until they become lines and are released on the woman and kid at high speed. At the same time, I turn around and run at full speed to the forest.

?!

A wall?!

In front of me there is a giant wall. A light of some sort is merging and working as a wall. Just a moment ago this wasn't there. But I can't just stay standing here. Luckily, the width is just a few meters. If I avoid it and advance, I can manage somehow.

I had stopped for a second, but soon I resume my running. I do a zigzag and try to evade it, that I am taking my time must be because of my own lack of ability. I want more instinct. Enough so that I can predict these walls that keep appearing one after the other.

Damn it, even though I have this speed, doing brakes all the time reduces the merit by half.

"Tch, how troublesome" (Makoto)

"Heh~ for an impromptu you were able to create this chain of high-power magic? I thought your fighting experience was the very essence of immaturity, but you are unexpectedly good. Mitsurugi, I am counting on your foothold and obstruction!" (Sofia)

This extremely strange spectacle of having a wall appear continuously. The forest that should not be impossible to reach to, feels so far now! Moreover, from under my feet a shining thing is sticking out as well. This is… a sword?! No, just the edge?!

I can't understand anything!

I concentrate on making the barrier at my feet stronger and scatter the edges that are popping out while running.

Ah~, so difficult to run! At this rate…

I felt a bit anxious about the obstruction I placed, so I turned my head a bit in order to confirm the situation. At that place…

“Ahahahaha! This is incredible. Not only is it conceited, it also chases you!” (Sofia)

“Taking them head on would be a bit heavy huh. Well, there won’t be problems if we divert it. More importantly, Sofia, if that is a secret card of the Goddess, there is something we should do right?”

“I know! But that will be when I do a formal greeting on him and he is still alive, okay?!” (Sofia)

… It’s, not working as an obstruction. Just what the hell are these guys?

The rapid-fire Brids are definitely not low in firepower. I have these clothes and these rings so my magic power should be pretty strong. And yet, what is that?

The kid is probably using a magic barrier to divert the rapid-fire Brids to different locations. Of course, some of the blown off brids end up to where the demons and hyumans are, but it seems he is not doing any follow up for that. How heartless!

So it is possible to change the length and angle to divert magic huh. When I have time, this is a technique I want to learn. But I don’t have the leisure to observe that kid carefully.

The woman’s side is doing an unbelievable thing. She is

using her sword to cut the rapid-fired brids, dashing like a keen beast to shake off those homing brids and evading left and right. Also, the numerous shining sword-looking things floating in mid-air, I don't know if those are made by the woman or by the kid, but she is using those swords as "footing" to perform acrobatic moves, reducing the distance between her and me at a terrifying speed.

… You are kidding me right? She is cutting off the magic that is coming at high speed with a giant sword that requires both hands. What kind of monster is that?!

Moreover, she does that acrobatic-like mid-air sprint so easily!

Even though I am not the Goddess' hidden card or anything like that!

Ah, this wall. They are swords. A lot of swords are intersected to knit a wall. That girl, is she a special magic user or something? A sword magician maybe? The usability is questionable though. Well, I can't say anything in respect when I am currently surprised by it.

While I was trying to escape reality by thinking random stuff, she appeared right in front of me. A monster?!

Wasn't she behind me a few moments agoooo?!

There is such a bullshit hyuman in this world?! No, is she really a hyuman?

Her skin color and looks may be hyuman but, could it be she is actually a new creation from the demon race?!

The problem is not only that she caught up with me! She

kicked the sword wall, raised her giant sword and dashed towards me!

“Cau~ght you!!” (Sofia)

Contrary to the light words she said, the figure of the girl wielding that giant sword grew blurry in an instant. The girl who was in mid-air didn’t wait until landing, and just straightforwardly swung her sword at me! I expand a barrier at my front and enhance it with Sakai to confront her attack. It’s not like I don’t belief in the resistance of my armor, but I will do everything I can.

“?!”

An incredibly high-pitched sound reverberates and the sword of the girl was bounced upwards. I blocked it. But the barrier was also offset and destroyed! No way, that sword. Don’t tell me that sword has a crazy property like “magic killer” or something like that right?!

I wanted to try expanding a barrier again but I won’t make it in time. Her chase and mowing is faster. To be able to do such a feat with an unstable stance, just what kind of body control is that?!

Just like how I was surprised she was able to destroy my barrier, she was also shocked that her sword was repelled. That means she was pretty sure that attack would decide everything but was stopped. To be able to think that way when doing it with such an outrageousposture.

This woman, won’t she get astonished or waver? Or is it just that my decision-making is too slow? The ability to

instantly decide on your next action at a fight of life and death, I haven't learnt that before and there is no way I will suddenly be able to do it in real combat.

What to do? What should I do?!

I place the [Sakai] to protect only my body, and cross my arms to defend against the attack coming from my left. This time I can only wager on the eldwas. To avoid the worst case scenario, I thought about springing my body back but my reflexes couldn't follow so I was unable to do it. Rather, to be able to raise my arms is enough to make me wanna praise myself.

I can't close my eyes. There is no assurance that she won't do a follow-up. I resolve myself and prepare for the swing.

There is no doubt this is an imperfect attack stemming from a crazy posture. Even so, I can't relax.

However, it seems I won the bet. It was a dull attack and there was no pain. The part that was hit only felt a bit numb. I wasn't even sent flying.

I knew this in an armor that the eldwas are proud of, but to actually block a sword with clothes feels strange.

This time she landed and looks at me with eyes wide open, taking her distance from me, arriving at a pretty distant place. To do so many movements in mid-air and still be able to land with her two feet. Truly awe inspiring.

At her side there is the kid. So they have destroyed all the batteries huh. Well, I did set them up thinking only

about defense though. Seriously, what are these guys?

Don't tell me… heroes?!

No, that's not it. If that were the case, they wouldn't be with the demon army. What am I thinking?

If I remember correctly, this girl is called Sofia. The kid, I think the woman called him in the name of a famous sword. Mitsurugi. I feel like I have heard that name before…

"Wait~ that funny lump, what is it? He is way too amusing. He has ability and movements that aren't even worth mentioning, and yet, that hardness, reflex, magic power; his standards are on an abnormal level. A mismatched pervert" (Sofia)

"I also feel that way. Even though he is incredibly strong, he is way too crude. I don't understand at all" (Mitsurugi)

"Then provide me cover at least once" (Sofia)

"I was busy destroying the source of those attacks. Don't ask for the impossible" (Mitsurugi)

Are those commentaries about me? I am sorry for being amusing to the level of laughing and an incomprehensible existence. Also, I am glad to have left the batteries stationary there. I think I am the one that needs support the most though not you.

"Well, once we take control, the situation should change. Ghjkop \ kkjjgf" (Sofia)

"Oh, so we are using the ring on this single opponent? At

least say when you are going to use it Sofia" (Mitsurugi)

"There's no other choice right? This kid seems to have received quite the blessings from the Goddess after all" (Sofia)

Hah? What kind of incantation is "Trample down on the God's prayer"?

The latter half of what Sofia said made no sense and left me questioning. Words I haven't heard before. Are those keywords to activate something? But if I remember correctly, the tools that are filled with magic are normally activated with common language?

This language is a first for me.

As if responding her aria, the ring in Sofia's right hand crumbles. Not break, it was more like, crumbling to a state that would be impossible to restore.

Just like when I expand Sakai, a mysterious undulating sensation spreads out from the circumference of the crumbled ring.

With this… what does it change? It doesn't seem like the situation has changed at all though. My lifeline which is magic power can still be used without any problems. At the very least, the amount I still have inside me has no problems.

"Umu. It seems it is a success. With this the tests are done. However, this is interesting. To think that the day would come when we would be able to negate the interference of the Goddess. The worldwide influence she provides can now be changed at our whim" (Sofia)

Success. Then that means some sort of effect is in place. Damn it, I can't see what their hand is at all.

"From the beginning you and I were not blessed by it, so there is no demerit. Also, the demons and demon beasts as well. Basically, it is a tool that only has merits when used by someone that's not hyuman. Not only that, the effect of negating the Goddess blessing seems quite fast" (Sofia)

"But the one who created this was…" (Mitsurugi)

"Don't say it. There are still Goddess believers here after all" (Sofia)

Saying that, Sofia looks at me. Removing the interference of the Goddess? Doing something like that. Just what would that hyuman girl gain from it?

If she were a demon, it would be a topic that has high research value though.

They… don't take their eyes off me. I thought this was my chance to create a gate while they are talking, but if I concentrate and begin my aria, I feel like I will become chopping wood in an instant and that scares me.

Or more like, why am I on the side of the Goddess? I have gone through terrible things because of that bug you know?

Ugh, the sensation of my left hand is numbing. This is bad. Should I loosen the bandages? No, that's no good. I don't know how much blood I am allowed to bleed. I feel like it is a bad call to worsen the situation if I end up suffering blood loss.

This is the worst. Can healing magic cure an arm necrosis? Shiki, when I return I am really counting on you. I don't want to become a one-armed person at this age.

"I am not on the side of the Goddess" (Makoto)

Even though I know it won't get through them, I still say it.

"Hoh～, what does that mean?" (Mitsurugi)

"What, Mitsurugi. You understood those words? That was clearly not common language though" (Sofia)

Wa? Wait a moment, that girl. Don't tell me, she is a hyuman? This is bad, I did a blunder once again. Even though I knew my verbal expressions were fantasy-like, this "comprehension" that was given to me really doesn't distinct. As expected of a Goddess given ability.

"Red one, answer. What do you mean when you said you were not on the Goddess' side? You were without doubt brought to this battlefield by the Goddess. Aren't you like the two heroes that have been summoned from another world, someone that was brought here to protect Limia? That crazy power, I can only think it was given to you by the Goddess" (Mitsurugi)

"You, you are not a hyuman?" (Makoto)

While asking the kid if he was a hyuman, I pick up the word Limia.

Limia, if I remember correctly, it is a major power that is directly confronting the demon race. If they are calling

me a protector, does it mean this is a key location for Limia?

“Well, for now yeah. Right now I have chosen to take the form of a hyuman that’s all. You can talk if I am not hyuman? You get more and more mysterious. From your looks, could you be the half of a hyuman and something else?” (Mitsurugi)

Pointing a finger at Sofia, the kid makes clear that he is a different living being that has taken the form of a hyuman. What do you mean by me being a half from my looks? Sofia also called me a synthetic beast. I can’t accept that.

But this kind of situations where they tell me this things as if looking for a fight without any ill intentions, I already got used to it. It doesn’t anger me that much.

“I have no reasons to fight in this battlefield and I have no intentions on joining hands with the Goddess. How about it? Will you guys please leave this as a misunderstanding and leave me be?” (Makoto)

“That is impossible. I will have you die here. You were summoned here by the Goddess. There is no misunderstanding anywhere” (Mitsurugi)

“I just have a sort of previous connection with the Goddess that’s all. To kill me here, why is that? Because that hyuman woman called Sofia is allying with the demon race? I won’t be telling anyone that information” (Makoto)

The kid that was indifferently complying with my words,

suddenly becomes silent. He was looking at me with a dumbfounded expression. What is it?

I thought it was definitely because it would be bad for others to know she was cooperating with the demon race though?

“… Hyuman woman, you say? Kuku… Ahahahahaha!” (Mitsurugi)

The kid suddenly raises his voice and laughs loudly. Did I say something bad?

“What? Why did you suddenly begin laughing?” (Sofia)

“Sofia, listen. This guy, it seems he doesn’t know about you” (Mitsurugi)

I think this is obvious though. This is the first time I have met her after all. Moreover, she suddenly tried to cut me down.

“… Huhn～ Well, if he is the same as the heroes, that is a given right?” (Sofia)

“But he doesn’t seem to be a hero. And he is pleading for his life. Saying to “please leave me be”” (Mitsurugi)

What’s so strange in that? Just, there is no doubt the situation is bad. Because the hostility has increased.

“The Goddess does incomprehensible things. To think she would throw such an unknowledgeable person to the battlefield. I don’t think she just ran out of pawns though? You, being killed by people you don’t know and people that don’t even know your name. That is not

something you would like right? I permit you to tell us your name" (Mitsurugi)

"I don't intent to be killed. However, in these times, isn't your side supposed to name themselves first?" (Makoto)

I try my best to play strong. Also, if possible, I want to avoid an encounter with this monster. I want information, seriously.

"Kuku, your tongue is first rate huh. Fumu, fine. Then we will start first. The one here who is swinging the number one sword in this world is Sofia Bruga. Her nickname is "Dragon Killer" and level 920, a famous woman. And I am Lancer. Well, Sofia calls me Mitsurugi most of the time though" (Mitsurugi)

…

….. Eh?

Sofia Bruga? Dragon Killer?

Isn't that the name of the previously strongest level in the guild? Moreover, Lancer, that name, if I remember correctly, is the name of the dragon that was killed by Sofia isn't it? That's right, if I remember correctly, his nickname was Mitsurugi.

Moshimoshi? Moshimoooo~shi!

There is absolutely no reason for such a big fish to aim at my neck!

"… I am Raidou. A merchant" (Makoto)

I barely manage to name myself. However, the waves in my heart are not showing any signs of calming down. To be attacked by the highest peak of hyumans and the previous comrade of Tomoe. This situation is something I still can't put together in my mind.

"Raidou… huh. Saying you are a merchant, such an obvious lie-" (Mitsurugi)

"Hmph~, Raidou huh. You have finished introductions right? Once again, I am Sofia Bruga. Just as you see, I am an adventurer that is trying out being on the demon's side. And, the person that will be killing you" (Sofia)

Sofia interrupts the words of Lancer and announces her intent to kill me. This woman, just what is she thinking? If you are rising up against the Goddess, I feel like we could become friends, but why is it that it turned into killing me?

"Sofia, I was in the middle of talking. Then the so called Raidou, this is sayonara. You have seen something that shouldn't have been seen after all" (Mitsurugi)

You were the ones who told me.

Faster than his words were finished, in the surroundings of Lancer and in my own, as well as in the sky, swords created by him were beginning to appear.

It is a situation where it is not the appropriate time to talk.

This makes me laugh. It really makes me laugh.

This unreasonable checkmate, like hell I will let it! Not

being able to depend on the companions that I finally obtained, and die without anyone knowing. Like I will let that happen.

I won't think about holding back anymore. Or more like, I have been surprised left and right and have had no chance to hold back or anything!

No matter what, I will create a chance and escape!

Blood has been coming out too much and it is worsening my state. Damn Goddess. Calling me at a crazy place. I have decided to learn a way to go against her summoning as my utmost priority. I wonder how far the Academy teaches in regards to summoning topics.

Even when doing all this, that bugdidn't say anything to me. Is she really looking? Say something at the very least!

"Then, I am coming. Your crazy defensive power should be gone now that the Goddess' interference has disappeared. It will become a simple massacre now" (Sofia)

Ah, so that's what she meant with "interference".

That means, she called me all the way here no questions asked and now she is unable to do anything? No, it is because she can't do anything that she called me here? Uh… which one is it?

No matter which one it is, how stupid of her. As expected of bug Goddess, she is an idiot. Instead of saying "I found you" say "I want you to do something". I would totally run the opposite direction of her words though.

“It seems the heroes are being cornered by the demon general. To remove the remains of the Goddess in here as well is not a bad idea”

It seems this world has an Anti-Goddess faction. It reliefs me quite a bit and at the same time I am amazed that there is an anti-force in the world she manages.

I am a bit interested in the heroes though. Tsukuyomi-sama told me to treat them well after all.

It’s just, my life is foremost. I am sorry but, you heroes manage something by yourself.

Anyways, these idiots, they finally lowered their guard.

I feel their atmosphere has slightly slackened. They must have confidence in the effects of that ring.

They are free to believe I was being enhanced by the Goddess’ interference. Even if I deny it, they wouldn’t listen to my words anyways. They are confident they can defeat me now.

But well~ that won’t be happening.

Unlike before, I am going to “strengthen” after all.

Being in a battle stance, while feeling anger, I take off the rings left in my left hand and in my right hand. I take off all of my rings.

Chapter 76: Something Not That Far In The Past To Call It A Recollection

“Oooori～aaaa!”

“Wa?!”

Without adjusting the magic power, I take out all that I could and with no aria I release it to the front.

The magic power amount that can’t even be called magic, had turned into quite the shock wave, closing in onto them. Well, releasing it without thinking anything is its strongest point.

Seems it took them completely off guard, Sofia and Lancer get blown off vigorously. Hmph, me being weakened is something that you yourself thought I was. Life doesn’t always go your way.

The wall and the glittering edges that Lancer created were also blown away splendidly. My circumference and front get shaved off by the raging shock wave and in an instant everything in my field of vision is gradually destroyed.

If I were fighting with a hyuman on the level of the people I have met, this would be the part where I escape, but these two, especially Sofia, are existences I don’t understand. I want to clearly confirm that they are in a state they can’t fight back and then open the gate.

Nevertheless…

Just like when one does a big stretch at the time one wakes up, just like after you do a careful stretch; the whole of my body is enveloped in that comfortable sensation. My mood is also being somewhat uplifted. Maybe it is because I have taken off all my rings and am now in a natural state. Even if my coat is still taking big part of my magic power, there is a big difference in the magic power I can release and knit. Well, if I think of my maximum value, this amount is still low though.

I spread a strengthening and search [Sakai] at the same time. The strengthened searching abilitylets me check the state of the two that have taken their distance from me once again.

However, don't misunderstand. I don't have the ability to fight those two at close range. Even if I am being protected by an enhanced defense, there is no point if I don't escape. That is the combi of a dragon killer and a supreme dragon, there is no way I can let them inside Asora. I can't let my uplifted emotions take over my actions.

Conclusion.

I will have you guys receive my long distance bombarding! And so, after leaving you powerless, or in the worst case kill you, I will escape!

My left hand is like this, so I can't use it. The complexion is slowly getting worse. Shooting energy magic is the most it can manage right now. Pointing my hand helps a lot in the image. It is decided, my left hand will be used for spells. And so, in my right hand I now have an unshapely dagger that has a string coming out from its

handle. That it is until now that I am able to use them, shows that it is not fit to be used in real combat yet. Anyways, this could be called the physical form of my negative thought patterns about running and protecting.

Uchine＜打根＞, is what this weapon is called. The way of using it was taught by my sensei, so at that time against Mio I was able to use a dagger properly.

At close range I use a dagger. Middle-range, a counterweighted sickle and chain and at long range, this is the weapon. It is a weapon that you throw at your opponent. Of course, it a weapon that is filled with problems to use as my main weapon. For me as well, as a person that had learned the bow from sensei, this is also just something that she taught me to use as well. Before she taught me I didn't even know it existed. It can also be placed in a bow as an arrow and shot that way. However, I don't have a bow at hand so there is no point. Also, not only do I not have much experience in using it as a spear, I don't even have a passing grade on using it as a dagger or throwing tool. To swing it with the string is totally out of my field of expertise. Geez, it is obvious I will get wounded doing something like that.

That there is knife techniques mixed in the uchine's way of using is probably because of the own style of sensei. She seems to have been in the battlefield for a period of time after all. Luckily I wasn't brought overseas. She is a teacher I am proud of, but I would reject accompanying her to those places.

Even so, crossing swords against those two with these is definitely impossible. The armor of the Eldwas blocked that sword, I don't think the weapons they make lose in

comparison, but the most important part who is me still doesn't have enough ability to wield it properly. Or more like, that Sofia girl is abnormal. To do a helm breaker in mid-air and then connect it with a mow down, even in acrobatic levels that is impossible. It makes me think that she is the one mixed with a cat or some sort of beast. Also, one that has quite the wild instincts.

That's why it is fine to use them only to block attacks when needed. It is better than stopping them with my arms after all. With the special handling of the uchineI might be able to make her recoil, or so I think.

Using that as my secret weapon…

I take my stance. Just like when I shoot with my bow. That I don't need to put away the uchinein my right hand in order to use spells is one of the good parts of magic.

This one will be different from the previous preemptive attack. I will have them taste a certain hit attack.

That's right. Compared to the brids I released a while ago, the power of this one is different.

Just try deviating this one if you can.

Show me that you can cut it down.

Don't think the speed and power are the same as before!

Even in this deteriorated field of vision, Sakai tells me the position of my enemies accurately. Yosh.

Like I will wait for you two to fix your stance. First one is Sofia! If possible, stay lying down just like that!

On the drawn to the limit brid, my image tells me of my certain hit. Fire!

The next one is created right after that and I turn it into an arrow. I pour my own magic power to it and just like how I shoot with a bow, I release it. This one is for Lancer.

The element is fire. It explodes in place so I can expect a certain amount of leeway in the hit area.

Even when the vision is taken away because of the cloud of sand my magic power wave created, she does a big step to the side as if she activated some sort of superhuman sixth sense. Because of my Sakai I was able to tell she was trying to avoid it. Lancer did that before too, could it be they don't even care about the army that is at their back?

… But, that is useless.

A brid that I have coupled with my certain hit image acts just like the arrows I shoot, they all hit their target. It may be defended though, but it will definitely get the enemy. That's right, even if something miraculous happens just the moment my image becomes reality, the level of accuracy in which it pursues its target is on a different degree. It hits Tomoe and Mio. There is no way it won't hit you!

And since it is different from a real bullet, its homing capability is incredibly high. Instead of decelerating when trying to head to the direction the girl took, the brid actually accelerated.

To increase its speed when changing directions, that is something I really can't understand.

Right now the certain hit is something I do with the same feeling asthe bow, so hitting is still ambiguous. I don't have definite confidence in it. Magic is still a grey area for me.

Sofia uses her prided giant sword to cut off the brid that is flying at high speed. How scary. Even when releasing an arrow of that speed it doesn't surpass the reactions of hers? As expected, close range is not a good idea.

However, no matter if I already predicted this to some extent after watching that rapid-fire brid, it is still surprising how she tries to cut them off. Is she a genius?

Even so, the result this time is…

"Kyaaaa!!!"

She made a high-pitched scream and was blown away by the explosion. Yosh! I can do this!

"Sofia?! What is up with this power?! I can't deviate it!" (Lancer)

The defense barrier Lancer created was destroyed and his childish body was send flying by the blast. It seems this side has received damage as well. Let me tell you this, I won't be resting my hand! If the momentum is restored, I don't know what could occur!

"Wai-, Mitsurugi?! Didn't he get stronger?!" (Sofia)

"I think so too! This is what I think but, could it be… he

was under a curse from the Goddess?! That shouldn't be possible, to go all the way to bring a person that is cursed by God?! There's no idiot who would summon someone like that!" (Lancer)

So it was the right choice to use fire for the blast huh. It looks like they are unable to move because of their confusion, but I don't need to confirm that anyways!

This time I will go with the element I am more compatible with, the water element which I can bring out even more power. If this manages to disable them, I will be able to open a mist gate!

"More is coming! He is able to do rapid-fires of magic with this much power?! What a cheat!" (Sofia)

She must have felt the convergence of magic power from me, Sofia lets out a voice filled with caution. The last part was a complain to me huh. If it's about complains, I have way more to say than you! I am being abused by the Goddess here!

"Sofia, return the sword's power to me! If it's a fire element magic, I will manage somehow! Take advantage of his opening when using magic and finish it in one go!" (Lancer)

Sofia assents to Lancer's words and moves to his side. Good, if the two are in the same place, aiming will be easier. It saves me trouble! If you are on the mindset of receiving my attack, then I will go with power as priority!

"Goooo!!" (Makoto)

Just like last time, I use the same sensation to shoot twice. It is clearly stronger and faster than when I used fire. I can't expect an explosion, but if it can at least freeze the area, it will make it even harder for them to move. When that happens, I will be in a bigger advantage.

"He changed to the opposite element?! Him alone?! Ei, just how out of the norms is this guy. But how stupid, if it is water it will make it easier for us!" (Sofia)

I can tell there is something flowing from the sword of Sofia into Lancer. That sword was something that was residing in a dragon? H-How dazzling…

How dare you try to cut someone with such a dangerous thing.

From Lancer's front, a blue shield that is stronger than the previous one is created. Could it be, water element? Is that guy the same as Tomoe, able to control multiple elements? Moreover, water?

The blue arrows and blue barrier clash. What happens when two of the same element clash? Don't tell me it will just one-sidedly disappear right?

"Wa?!"

A voice of surprise comes from me and Lancer.

The two blue arrows stopped the moment they clashed with the barrier of the same color, or so it seemed. However, in a second the arrows began to slowly slip through it. The blue shield was being rippled with my arrows at its center. It was as if the shield was welcoming

it.

If two of the same element meet, that is what happens?! But this is lucky for me. It looks like my attack will hit after all. It's the unexpected attack advantage, lucky!

"This is bad, really bad Sofia. Please finish this quickly! That guy, are you telling his aptitude in water element is higher than mine?! If it were "the invincible one" or "myriad colors" I could understand, but for a hyuman to surpass me is just…!" (Lancer)

"If you are frozen, I will be leaving you behind Mitsurugi" (Sofia)

"I will provide you a bit more service as a foothold, so when that happens please melt and save me" (Lancer)

Foothold? Oioi, there is also the aftermath of brid you know. I think kicking mid-air swords and rushing at me is a bit impossible.

The two of you can't move from your spot. Just obediently turn into ice. And then I will calmly return!

The arrow silently penetrates the shield.

"Yosh!" (Makoto)

"If it's the head maybe I can cut it off?" (Sofia)

Again.

Just above me, I heard a voice.

I won't even try and look. I reflexively jump back.

The sword slightly grazes the tip of my nose. My barrier didn't make it in time again! The hot sensation that is transmitted in me makes me knit my brows instinctively.

When I attack with all I have, I don't have the time to prepare a defensive barrier! Is this also a key point in practice?!

From the front of my vision, I see the figure of Sofia. Eh?! Weren't you over there?

Just what kind of trick did you use to suddenly change positions?! This is not my miss! I was clearly paying attention to her!

I shouldn't have shot with all I had and should have left a barrier on standby with me. But if I were to take my time doing that, the result would have been the same. Damn it.

The attention I had on Lancer's side, I forcefully take it out and concentrate my all in Sofia. When I look closely, Sofia has already accumulated something. It's coming coming coming!

"He reacted again! Really, what a funny specimen!" (Sofia)

What's with the "he reacted again". It's because you always talk out loud that I am able to evade them! Is she taking me lightly? I don't know if she is just an idiot that lets everything slip though. Maybe the price of having such a beast-like instinct is her brain and mouth. That must be it!

From her eyes I can see overflowing blood thirst and

vigor. Without pausing her movements, she instantly entered pointblank range. This is bad!

In a second…

Sofia turns her back to me. Eh? Why at this time?

That back figure took me by surprise. I lost sight of her weapon. Hiding her weapon with her own body, she didn't chase me who was stepping back. That's right, that sword can still reach me from here. No, it is actually the perfect distance for her weapon!

Left. The direction she turned just a bit below. A reverse turn attack is swung. I can't evade it! So fast!

Counter, no, defense? But using magic with this mental strain? Impossible! I am going to be defeated?!

In the middle of my confusion, I unconsciously do a half-step to the front, grab the uchinewith both hands and miraculously connects with her attack.

Why was I able to manage something like this?

The sound of metal rings for the first time between her and me. From both of my hands the intense shock and vibrations are transmitted. From my left hand that can barely grab it, the sensation is dull. It feels like I will soon be unable to use it.

"… You are kidding, right?" (Sofia)

This is not my voice.

… Uh, I'm alive?

I can only call this a miracle. The experience that sensei taught me so hard, might have moved my body here. I am sorry for complaining about this not being archery or anything close to that, sensei.

Hearing the words of Sofia, I close my eyes and let my vision recover. My face is facing down so luckily she didn't notice. Anyways, how pathetic. But I am alive! I was saved!

It might be too good to say it was unconsciously, but I can't rely on something like that, I need to learn how to create a barrier reflexively or I will die one of these days. If these person is the strongest in the world and the definite number one, it's one thing, but if there are numerous of those types at once I will certainly need it.

After this I want to learn to create multiple barriers and a defense magic that I can leave in place. Eh? Aren't I just thinking about defense?

I once again confirm the situation.

Oh~. What is this?

Sofia's sword, the sharp sword that had a wide width and one needed two hands to wield…

The emerald green and almost transparent sword blade that one could even feel beauty…

Broke. It wasn't a clean cut. Just what happened, I don't know the clear details, but it broke to the point that I can't count how many parts it turned into. Not even ¼ of the sword blade was left.

Eldwas, you guys are seriously incredible. What's up with this uchine. To think I would see the day a dagger breaks a giant sword. Why did I close my eyes again? This is clearly a tool that has surpassed the area of self-protection. Incredible, this is really incredible.

"I-I am saved～" (Makoto)

I whisper dazed. There is one other thing I have understood. In the middle of fighting I seriously can't communicate with writing. There's no room for it, so it is obvious though. I just noticed it.

And so, I comprehended. That I was in the thought I had stopped just before I began panicking, but the truth is I was swallowed by it a long time ago.

Not reaching the conclusion I should have and not being able to do the things I could have done.

What a pathetic display.

Suddenly, the sensation of a hand is felt on my back.

DAMN-!!

"You, are thoroughly cheat" (Sofia)

All of a sudden, a soft sensation is pressed on my face. Eh?

Sofia was hugging me closely. What… is this? Breast?

Ah, I see. The brid a few moments ago destroyed her breastplate. Tte, eh?

I somehow turn my face up. At that place there is obviously the face of her. For some reason, a wide smile.

Her body had already lost most of her metal protection, so the sensation of her body was clearly transmitted to me. I thought she would have barbarian-like muscles, but that doesn't seem to be the case. She was more woman than I thought. Her sword gave a big impression after all.

The shirts and short pants must have a stronger effectiveness than her metal armor. Like the clothes I have.

That I am being embraced from the very front and my face is hitting her breast making me crazy must mean, Sofia is 180cm or more huh. If she wore heels, this scene would look like a kid and an adult.

!!

That's not it! First I should concentrate in the current situation! If worst comes to worst, I will use the uchine in my right hand on Sofia and…

"Uh!! Tto, what incredible superhuman strength. So to resume, a god body in an average mind huh. Ah, you were going 2v1 against us and were able to stay sane so, maybe your mind is also tough. Wouldn't you be able to face the roar of a dragon and its overpowering aura? But well, your skills are no good though" (Sofia)

Well, thank you. I don't have a hobby of fighting dragons so that information is pointless for me though.

She is embracing me with all and arms so I am unable to move as I want. However, it seems I will be able to

somehow release myself from this restrain. Even though she swings that kind of sword, her physical strength isn't that much huh. How mysterious.

I am sorry but, I don't want to stay in this incomprehensible situation where I lose my initiative. I will have my escape.

"Struggling, is dangerous you know?" (Sofia)

Her face comes closer to mine. Sofia's voice is whispered in my ears.

"What?" (Makoto)

"Ah, you don't understand what I am saying right. Well, I don't intend to explain so this is convenient" (Sofia)

Wa?

For some reason I couldn't hear the last words of Sofia. I feel like she said something really low though.

Just, it feels like the wind has suddenly become stronger. Wind magic, maybe? But to use an attack magic in this glued state, not even she would go unscathed. Also, I have already prepared Sakai and defense magic.

I confirm the situation of my surroundings. Before I noticed, the characteristic scent of the battlefield had become dim and disappeared. The clouds were looking strange. For a while now the wind has been strong.

Anyways, escaping is highest priority!

I accumulate my strength. Eh? I feel something in my feet

as well…

“!! There’s no need to hurry so much, I will release you!” (Sofia)

With Sofia’s words, my field of vision widens in a breath. The sensation of her body also disappeared in an instant. To substitute it, a strong wind crashes against my whole body powerfully.

?!!!

Blue… the blue sky?!

Sky?!

I’m floating?! No, I’m falling!

“I am sorry but, I have sealed your wind abilities. If you fall at these height, even if it is you, you will die or receive a considerable damage. We will now leave it to nature and bid our sayonara here. Aaah, in the end I had to rely on his “foothold”. It will be troublesome to melt him huh” (Sofia)

Sofia’s figure was at my vicinity. She must be using some kind of magic to float. She is not falling.

Or more like, foothold? Lady, are you telling me you can walk down from here? Nonono, this is pretty high up in the skies you know?

The figure of her is steadily growing smaller. But her figure suddenly disappears.

“Bye bye, Raidou” (Sofia)

I once again hear her voice in my ear.

It's Sofia. When I turn my face, she is certainly there. Don't tell me, she can do instant movement? Depending on the situation, isn't that even more cheat than me?!

Her figure disappears once again. With some sort of presentiment, I look below me. When I do so, I see a number of glowing things. That are the blades that Lancer creates, if I remember correctly. Now that I think about it, the ones floating in mid-air were not used to attack. Could it be, those were footholds? But how was Sofia able to…

I see the figure of her waving her hand. But it disappears again. What remains is one blade. Don't tell me…?!

Sofia is able to change places with a blade to mobilize?! Is that fair?!

But there is originally no meaning in having Lancer set a blade so high up in the sky. I can only think of it being for the sake of "exchanging".

Aaahh!!

More importantly, what should I do? This situation resembles that time with the damn bug so much.

At my dropping point there are glittering blades floating so it is even more brutal!

I am falling steadily. How long till I drop?! Is there some sort of custom in this world that says one has to throw a person from the sky when you can't handle it?!

N, anyways…

I see.

Maybe it is because this is my second time. There was a part of me that was strangely calm. The tension that was clinging onto me all this time disappears as if it was a lie.

The one minute, was created huh.

Even so, I haven't given my "thanks" to that Goddess bug. Tsukuyomi-sama, are you doing well?

I finish my aria. There is still time.

I spread out my Sakai and look below. Because of the clouds, I can't confirm it with my naked eyes. From below, the demon's march had restarted. It seems pretty far in the northeast, it looks like there is a war occurring.

The effect has been reduced to an ambiguous level where I only feel the presence, but I can slightly understand the situation. It seems they are trying to assault a fortress. It seems like there is no mistake, they are doing battle in a fortress-looking building. I can't tell who is the one winning though. They haven't attacked the fortress so the defending side is probably the one in the advantage. I was probably… right below here. At a place a bit disconnected from the battlefield.

That means, there were numerous battles taking place. Is it possible that there are multiple monsters that can surpass that Sofia roaming all over? I was a frog in the well huh. This has taught me the through importance of experience. Let's properly prepare counter-measures if there is a next time. If I can't use my magic power in real

combat, then no matter how much magic power I have there is no point.

Even if I am able to think calmly in the situation, that was only because of my defense capabilities. If I can't analyze the situation as fast as possible and move according to it, I am no different from a plank.

I feel anxious about my counter-measure turning pointless by some other troublesome happening. But even so, I can only believe that I will be rewarded by it someday.

And so…

Sofia should be directly below right? The broken sword is there and Lancer is also there after all.

Since I have the chance, let's send them a gift.

I face below and extend my left hand. With the fingers I have left and the dark red blood that has coagulated and turned hard. The whole arm has already turned purple and because of the blood obstruction, I can barely feel it anymore. It is quite the bad state. How dare you do such a thing.

My right hand goes into my pocket. Since I have the leeway, let's take off my clothes too. I wanted to throw them my magic at full-power, but if I do so I wouldn't be able to escape from this mid-air situation. The strong wind that is hitting my body makes even stabilizing my stance hard.

When I feel the rings with my right hand, the corner of my lips naturally lift. The tension was controlling me and

I couldn't concentrate well, but it may be proof that I felt a gloom and ugly anger at this current situation. A clear anger that pushes me to yell and blow everything away.

I purposely pour magic power to the already saturated rings to an even farther step, to the point it was going to crack.

With Sakai I check all of Lancer's blades at the landing point. Putting all of them in my sight, I release a brid. The moment it was fired from my left hand, it turns into dozens of small balls that headed to Lancer's blades and probably what are Sofia's footholds.

This one is probably stronger than the brid that surprised the two of them. Here I was able to concentrate without anyone getting in my way after all. I am in the middle of dropping though.

With this they are probably unable to come to where I am. While at it, some of them may have hit them.

Next, I take out the rings that caused a disaster in Asora and concentrate a formed brid onto it, expanding it even more.

Putting this much into it, even if I throw from here, it should gouge the ground and blow up.

I could tell that inside the six rings there was a spherical brid that was unsteadily swimming. Eat this, dragon killer and supreme dragon. This is my thanks for playing around with me however you wanted!

Those kind of things, you know, I amalready filled with only the damn Goddess!

A dynamite ring brid that hasn't turned into an arrow is grasped in my hand.

"Fools! There was no need to seal my wind element! I can't even use it anyways～～!!" (Makoto)

Thanks to my altitude lowering quite a bit already, the amount of information I could obtain from Sakai had improved and I was able to feel the presence of the two. Saying words of regards that no one heard, I fired the brid. And at the same time, I create a mist gate in the space I was dropping to.

I accomplish my return to Asora. The moment I opened it, I had already calculated the ending as well, so the gate should be terminated instantly. I am glad it all went well.

If the clouds didn't get in the way, I would have been able to see my ability in action. But if I were to activate it when I am below the clouds, there was the chance the brid ring that was in my hands would rampage. There is also the fear of someone seeing the mist gate. I had no choice.

Ah.

I suddenly feel the anemic sensation I frequently felt when I was a child. My vision was steadily blacking out and my field of vision was narrowing. What a bad sensation.

The moment I thought this wasn't good, it was too late.

I, who smelled the familiar scent of Asora, lost all of my tension at once and as my conscience went far away, I collapsed.

The dropping impact that I feared was not there, and taking its place was a warm sensation of something enveloping me.

Next Chapter is about the disaster brought upon by the brid ring.

Chapter 77: Lake Of Stars

— In the time Makoto is sleeping —-

An unfitting young kid was dragging one of his feet in the battlefield as he welcomes the companion that was returning from the sky.

“So is it over?” (Lancer)

“Probably. I went to the highest foothold you prepared after all. This was my first experience overlooking from the top of clouds. Don’t you know how to hold back?” (Sofia)

The woman that landed didn’t mind about the scolding tone of the kid and just answers.

“To think my sword would break that way. It was as if I was in a nightmare. I admit I was a bit panicked” (Lancer)

“I was literally the one who experienced it, so I was even more startled. The weapon a pervert holds is also in the pervert level huh. It was an unshapely dagger I have never seen before though” (Sofia)

“I don’t remember seeing such a dagger either. If possible, I wanted to collect it and duplicate it in our base but…” (Lancer)

The kid-shaped supreme dragon looks at the sword that’s on his hands. Only a bit of the base is left from the blade.

“So you retrieved it. Thanks. I totally thought you were

frozen in ice and died from the shock. It seems that wasn't the case, nice going" (Sofia)

"It is a part of me, so it is obvious I would do so. However, the moment it was broken, I felt a pain as if my whole body was being torn apart. Even though I was inside an annoying case of ice, the pain resuscitated me and I felt like dying" (Lancer)

"Well, sorry to hear that. Now, let's give the advance signal to the demons and take it easy. As expected, I am unable to fight for some time" (Sofia)

"… Your sword was broken and your armor destroyed. You are even more tattered than when you fought against me. That your fighting spirit hasn't weakened is commendable, or more like shocking" (Lancer)

Lancer's words smelled like sarcasm. And at the same time, he was also praising the ability of his partner Sofia.

"In your case, you killed my companions, right? Well, they were reckless people that were gathered to kill a dragon anyways" (Sofia)

"Fumu, this time no one died huh" (Lancer)

"Yeah, almost all of my equipment is a goner and my body is all rattled. Even so this is probably better. We were able to take care of that pervert called Raidou or something like that. In a country without a hero, we will be able to provide enough damage to cease the functioning of Limia" (Sofia)

One could feel the amazement in Sofia's words. Even for the girl named the Dragon Killer that has passed

numerous battles, the self-called merchant Raidou was an existence she couldn't comprehend.

An anti-magic sword that was filled with a supreme dragon's power against a barrier. In that attack that she gave her all, she was only able to offset the barrier. An incredibly strong barrier. And despite all that he took his time to reform his own barrier.

Using an amount of time that could be called way too long in a battlefield to confirm the situation, and on top of that, his indecisive part which only though about escaping from the very beginning. After that, using a homing magic that Sofia hasn't seen before. Thinking about the cost and performance of homing functions, it is an inefficient act no one would perform.

His sword skills were like a newbie who was growing his pubes. For his skills with the dagger to be like that, it was awful. It was to the point one would think he was making fun of the battlefield. At least, that's how Sofia felt.

(But that last attack… For some reason, at that one time, Raidou stepped forward. Even though he was taken aback and was showing signs of retreating. Because of that, he was able to properly clash swords with me, moreover, he broke my sword) (Sofia)

In those movements, she felt like it wasn't his own will but an instinctive action that kicked in. A movement that went against the predictions of the Dragon Killer.

The thoughts of stepping forward against an upcoming weapon is an action that is practically impossible for a magician. Even if he is a so called merchant. However,

Raidou did it. It made Sofia wonder if Raidou actually has experience in swordsmanship.

(Are you telling me in that situation his body was able to remember those movements and connected his actions? He didn't give me the impression that he trained so much to be able to do something like that though. That means…) (Sofia)

"Oi, something is…" (Lancer)

Lancer's whisper-like words returned Sofia's consciousness to reality. She soon understood why he was looking at the sky with a distorted expression.

From the sky, several dozens of blue lines came raining down from the sky. Breaking through the clouds, they all came down without distinction.

Each one was thin and were piercing the ground like a buckshot. If the barrier of Lancer wasn't there, the bullets would have hit where the two of them were. The power of the bullets were on a level Lancer's defense was able to defend against, but it was an attack that didn't weaken. Thinking about the numbers, it was in a level that would rain for 10 minutes or so in the battlefield.

The demon army that had resumed their march, seeing the blue lights falling, one could tell that they were falling into chaos. Luckily, it didn't seem like there would be a second round falling, but it was a situation where they can't relax.

"?! This is!" (Sofia)

"Damn Raidou, is he telling us he will take us all along to

his grave?!” (Lancer)

“I am going! I will go and obstruct him. If this continues, the army will be affected!” (Sofia)

“Sofia, you can’t! With the attack just now, the blades working as foothold were all destroyed. To think he would be able to destroy that amount of blades!” (Lancer)

“Then create more now. The next round might… wait” (Sofia)

The words of Sofia urging Lancer were stopped midway. Her eyes were looking at the sky again. Looking at the clouds that were blocking the view of the one man that should be there.

“… An attack to destroy the footholds for the sake of not pursuing him. That one just now was for that reason right, Raidou? You are telling usyour real attack is coming now” (Sofia)

Lancer’s expression was filled with bitterness. Sofia was staring up as well.

This attack just now was practically thrash for Makoto. Even with that, it was a magic with wide area of effect and with more than average power. And in truth, the demon army that received this attack had their formations disturbed.

Its element was water. Lancer looks at one of his legs. Unable to completely stop his attack, he received the magic and was now frostbitten. He wasn’t sure if he will be able to use it anymore, but at least he was sure that

this level of wound will not let him use his leg in this battlefield.

“Just how much will he make me laugh, that guy. This isn’t an amount of magic power a single person should be able to create! And you are telling me he still has something up his sleeves?” (Sofia)

“Water element huh. One can tell he is quite confident in his ability with water” (Lancer)

(But what does this mean? A water spirit hasn’t lend anyone its powers in this place. Not only that, the magic power in the area is practically unused. There is no way he was able to create these spells without utilizing the magic power in the area…) (Lancer)

The supreme dragon Lancer notices a strange point. A big amount of magic power is needed in order to do wide area attack magic. Of course, one would need the help of a spirit and also the magic power in the surroundings. Because it is impossible to do so with your own magic power.

“Water. In that case, with this…” (Sofia)

Hearing Lancer’s whisper, Sofia was enlightened and she holds a necklace in her hands.

This is a product that lets one gain the assistance of a water spirit, and Lancer also knows of this property. However, the usage is only one time. In terms of water, one would probably obtain omnipotence over it. An incredibly high-grade tool. It’s so valuable they didn’t use it against the “arrow” of Raidou. Because Sofia and

Lancer were confident they could manage without it. As a result, Lancer received an injury and when thinking about the current situation, it might have been the correct decision to save it.

(Certainly, with that we would be able to erase the influence of a water spirit from his spells. And normally it could even make him misfire. No matter what he tries to shoot, with the water spirit prohibiting his skills, the attacks he will be able to shoot are going to be limited. But… what's with this bad presentiment?) (Lancer)

"Lancer, I am counting on you for foothold. I will go where the effective range is and destroy his magic" (Sofia)

"… That is, you can't Sofia" (Lancer)

"Why?" (Sofia)

"Because it is not certain. We will use that, however, it will be for defense" (Lancer)

Believing in his instincts as a supreme dragon, he gives instructions to Sofia.

And then he contacts the commander of the demon army. The commander that was trying to calm down the disorder received a contact from the two who took the front and fought against that person who was summoned by that annoying light. He soon reacted to his message.

Even when seeing the golden light that is characteristic of the Goddess, the commander wasn't controlled by hatred and just concentrated on arranging for the new situation. Since the ones who headed to the light were

Sofia and Lancer, controlling the army was easier. Anyways, he is a capable one.

‘Prepare for an incoming attack in the surroundings and create a defense barrier as quick as you can’

One could tell the demon army reacted to the orders promptly. As expected, they are really well trained, is what Lancer thought in admiration as he overlooked the situation. But there wasn’t much time left. A straining magic power is beginning to converge. Like an idiot who only knows of one thing, he predicted that another of those “arrows” was coming.

“Defense, huh. Understood. Certainly, I have a bad feeling about this” (Sofia)

“That’s how it is. You are able to go over there right?” (Lancer)

Lancer points at the demon army. He already deployed his glittering blades in the vicinity.

“Your preparations are fast. Then, I’ll be going” (Sofia)

“I’m counting on you” (Lancer)

Sofia nods at Lancer’s words. While cradling him on her arms, she exchanges positions with a blade.

A great noise pricks the ears of the two. They were in the middle of the troops so it is to be expected. The two of them hurry to the inside of the defense barrier.

“And? Should I use this now?” (Sofia)

Sofia holds the necklace and asks Lancer.

“Let’s see. In this part should be fine. Sofia, use that only to envelop us. Just in case” (Lancer)

“?!”

“If it is placed on top of the barrier, my heart won’t settle” (Lancer)

“… Even though we have shared a table with them for a few days. How cruel” (Sofia)

“It’s not like we have become companions. You also, I don’t feel guilt in you though?” (Lancer)

“We are in the battlefield after all. In terms of position, we are mercenaries. It is obvious to think about our lives as priority. I will follow the decision of my partner” (Sofia)

Sofia sends magic power to the indigo blue jewel necklace. The jewel glitters and crumbles, enveloping the two of them with the same blue glittering the jewel produced.

“It’s coming” (Lancer)

Lancer says.

“Really, we are like a bush snake” (Sofia) ＜ホント、藪蛇だったかしらねえ＞

Sofia’s words sound as if she was regretting something, but her expression showed an interest in what was about to occur.

“We got no choice. If we were to look at the situation just as it is, the demons would have all rushed to that golden light and we would be unable to resume their march. That color which represents the Goddess is a symbol of fear and hatred for the demon race. If the troops we finally managed to put in order cause an insurgence, we wouldn’t be able to achieve our objective” (Lancer)

“And then, this is the result. Wouldn’t it have been easier if we just let them rush to that Raidou guy and have him kill about half of them in order to tie them back in fear?” (Sofia)

“If it’s just about the result. Well, objectively speaking, we might have been able to negotiate with him” (Lancer)

“What do you mean?” (Sofia)

“That he might actually be willing to cooperate with our objectives, and for that sake Raidou would be tolerant. Is what I assumed” (Lancer)

“I see. An impossible alternative huh” (Sofia)

“You… you should have noticed that he at least has hostility towards the Goddess right? But its fine to see it as that being all it is” (Lancer)

“It did feel that way. If he is someone that doesn’t care about the methods in order to achieve an objective, this attack would be the rising of the curtains. Ah, it’s coming” (Sofia)

“Umu. You have perception on the level of a demon race. As expected of you. Right on the mark” (Lancer)

It seems normal demon soldiers were beginning to sense the incoming attack. Something similar to screams were heard from here and there.

(What scary magic power. If it comes down just like that, even the hyumans that scattered will be caught in it! Ah, I see. What's strange was the magic power. There's no doubt what is coming is that arrow magic. It's not a wide area magic. That means, he is not using the magic power dispersed in the world nor is he using the support of a spirit. He is using his own magic resource to create magic of this scale. Then don't tell me the amount of magic power he has in himself is already…?!) (Lancer)

His thoughts were cut off at that moment.

A blue light illuminating his body.

—-

A blue distorted arrow opens a hole in the clouds.

The size isn't that big. To the point one can't comprehend how it bore such a big hole in the clouds.

In the beginning, seeing the difference between the size and the magic power they felt, they were as if all their tension was gone.

But the change took only an instant.

No one knows what happened inside the arrow, but a circle shaped ripple was born from inside it. It was as if an object had fallen into a water surface that ripple spread into the sky.

A few noticed the arrow swelled and accelerate.

Drawing a ripple in the sky once, the clear blue arrow repeats the same reaction.

3 times, 4 times. As the ripples increased in the sky, the arrow increased its size and speed.

It had already became a giant spear that released blue light. The spear pierced an area a bit away from the center of the demon army.

The army should have created a defense barrier in the vicinity. However, as if saying there was none, spears began piercing the crown of the troops' heads.

A final reaction occurs. But this time, it wasn't in the sky. It was because the spear was already in a state where it is pierced in the center of the army. It blows away the soldiers in its surroundings and when the distortion returns to its origin point, a freezing gale takes its place and rages. The devastating wind instantly converts the demons at a wide scope into frozen sculptures. The spear that had already created a disaster, in place of the ripples, it now accelerates and burrows completely into the ground.

A moment of silence.

From the feet of all the demons, no, in the whole ground itself a light is emitted. In the beginning it illuminated the whole battlefield and extended to the sky like a line, next, innumerable amount of lights of differing thickness followed. In a short amount of time, the landscape and sky were painted by the light.

A magnificent view. This was the only word that described this attack.

The spell caster, Mitsumi Makoto, probably wouldn't expect such a spectacle of this level would occur.

Makoto? He is most likely thinking this only amounted to pestering the battlefield.

He didn't notice…

That the brid he fired onto Sofia and Lancer was on a size totally different from when he shot it in the far off skies. A magic that he activated while experiencing the battlefield, moreover, in a state where his mind was totally filled with a danger to his life. A magic he slowly created while concentrating more than the normal. The difference in power is big. There's no doubt one of the reasons was because he was able to be in a normal state of mind in the far off sky, no, it was because this was the second time he was experiencing that misfortunate occurrence he was able to manage.

Moreover, he is using as a reference the power of the ring explosion that destroyed the clone body of Tomoe and the Arke that was barely saved. And it only caused the chain explosion of 4 rings. Mitsumi Makoto evaluates his own magic power way too low.

Whenever a ring was broken, the brid rapidly increased the range of its power by leaps and bounds. Makoto wouldn't even dream that it would create ripples in the sky and turn into a giant spear, piercing into the ground.

That everything he saw, the river, stream, forest, woods,

the meadows where the demons were in and even the far off dried brown earth as well.

Everything was being enveloped in light. The hyuman army that was retreating was no exception. In the place they werewas also in the diameter of the light that spear created.

Everything it touched was frozen and at the same time, being basked by that enormous energy, they break into dust. Turning into dust, they didn't even leave a shadow behind and just dye the place in blue color. The spear that fell down from the sky had already created a destruction dome in its hemisphere.

In an instant that felt like eternity, the light steadily disperses.

At the site one could see the devastation as if the place was grinded… or not.

A big accumulation of water that was slightly smaller than the dome, but bigger than a pond. A single "lake" was created.

Just how much power is it needed to achieve this? At least not in the scope that a single person would be able to possess. It was fitting to call it a tactical weapon.

In the place where a forest was there and a prairie as well, a single surface of water reflects the sky as if it was always there to begin with. Water flowed into the several rivers that were in the vicinity, and they flow downstream again. It was an attack that changed the map.

On its lake surface, it was sparse, but there was the shadow of something floating in the air.

It practically didn't move from its place. It wasn't a soldier that survived miraculously. Most of them had barely any part of their body left and the state of their corpses varied. No, to be able to retain a part of your body in that destruction is enough to call it a miracle.

But that shadow was shaped as a person. Not only did it retain its whole body, while trembling, it put its right hand on its face and moves the wet hair that was blocking its eyes.

It was the Dragon Killer, Sofia Bull.

When looking carefully, close to her, one could also see a kid who lost one of his legs. Lancer.

"… Lancer, are you alive?" (Sofia)

"….."

"Hey, that necklace. If used as defense, even if it is only one time, isn't it supposed to protect the user completely from water element magic?" (Sofia)

"……"

"My "substitute" was destroyed, my order-made armor was destroyed and practically everything related to defense was blown away though? Look at me, I am naked, NAKED" (Sofia)

Just as she said, right now she was practically naked. Her shirt was torn apart and only a miserable amount

remained, but there is no way one could expect any effects aside from working as cloth.

“… I see. It took one of my legs” (Lancer)

The leg he was dragging was gone. He wasn’t left unscathed.

“Raidou, that bastard is dead right?” (Sofia)

“… Probably. He might be floating just like us though” (Lancer)

Without exchanging looks, the two of them look at the sky while talking. They aren’t even touching the topic about why they are floating. It must be because somewhere in their mind, they understood they miraculously survived. That is what their eyes told as they look into the distant sky.

“… I think we should look for him and kill him before he grows up. If he learns competency and foundation, all hope will be lost” (Sofia)

“He is dead. He fell and died. For now just leave it at that. Anyways, even if we look for him now, there is no assurance that we can kill him. First we have to heal our wounds and prepare our equipment. I wouldn’t be able to handle having a mysterious body, who I don’t even know its origins, destroy our itinerary” (Lancer)

“Maybe he was not going all out?” (Sofia)

Sofia’s expression grew a bit fainthearted. She felt like Raidou was probably not being serious. Of course, he fought against the Dragon Killer. He was most likely

serious, or so she wants to believe. It was a slight doubt she had in her heart.

“I don’t understand. I don’t understand anything at all. It’s as if we were blindfolded by the Goddess. I don’t know what happened and I can’t explain it at all. Being like this, I really want to press some questions to that Goddess. Maybe we should have shown him, that way we might have heard it someday. About who was the one that called him” (Lancer)

“Raidou huh. I thought about playing with the heroes for a while, but now I won’t be able to do that” (Sofia)

The same belligerent smile she showed to Raidou once again appeared in her lips. Even though it was a situation where they are practically unable to move, she was already thinking about fighting.

“Leave that for later. Finish my task first before going after Raidou. After putting in order your equipment and restored your strength, you can go have your rematch” (Lancer)

The grieving Lancer proposes a plan.

“… You are right. I understand Mitsurugi. My cards are not enough to hunt that yet” (Sofia)

“First of all, we have to regain our stamina and return to land” (Lancer)

“Yeah, we are splendidly unable to move” (Sofia)

The two laughed on the water surface.

At this day, from the 10 or so that miraculously survived this tragic event, a single rumor was born between the hyumans and demons.

About a person wearing red garments, the third envoy of the Goddess. It is said that he possesses a tall figure and peerless beauty and his age is that of a young one.

The small whispered rumors were proved true by that lake and word slowly spread into the world.

“The Devil”

That he is called like that, Mitsumi Makoto still doesn’t know.

Chapter 78: The Waking Makoto

I silently open my eyes and wake up. What was reflected in my eyes was a ceiling I was relatively familiar with.

This is… my room?

It's been a while since I have collapsed. That anemic-like feeling, I think I haven't felt it since I was a kid. I was really weak in the past after all.

My way of sleeping as if a pole was sleeping on the bed. How splendid of me. I won't hear opinions like "that is gross".

I grab my high-tech blanket that is refreshing at summer and warm at winter, and pull my body up. It is so pleasant, no one would believe this article is used by orcs that live in this barren lands.

It might be nice to use it as merchandise.

However…. how sluggish. I can't seem to put strength in my body. Is this prove I have been sleeping for several days?

"N, fu～"

?

Eh, there is someone here?

I finally look in a direction other than up. I rub my fingers on my eyes, trying to recover from the somewhat blurred vision I had because I just woke up.

What in the world is this?

I am probably incredibly grateful that I am still half-asleep. Because without opening my mouth, I was able to analyze the situation as if placing a filter in my mind.

In my room, there were 3 people besides me.

First, Tomoe and Mio were sleeping at my left and right. Sleeping together? It doesn't seem like they are clinging to me. They are quite close though.

Tomoe is in yukata-like clothes. I don't know what she is punching, but at least she isn't directing it at me so it is fine. It's just, the yukata is incredibly disheveled. And also, I don't want to say too much about underwear but, why is it a *sarashi*?

Sarashi

It's not like I saw them, I was made to see it, is the excuse I made to no one in particular.

Mio is sleeping like a baby, rolling up her body. She is wearing an incredibly daring pajama that I question the reason she is wearing it. What an appearance, it is poison to the eyes. Well, she is properly wearing underwear so it is barely safe.

As someone who has a big and little sister, this isn't something I haven't experienced before. If you ask me if I don't mind it at all, I would answer that it is embarrassing though.

Fumu, for me to wake up when everyone is sleeping, I have quite the bad timing huh.

At the room's entrance, Tomoe's new clone was there. She is leaning on the door and doing a PE sit while sleeping. Is she intending to be a gatekeeper of sorts? One has to pull to open the door, so there is no point though.

She has an eldwa-style katana resting on the door just like the one Tomoe has. That is probably her weapon. Her looks are that of an elementary student, so anything she does would look charming.

She looks like a chibi Tomoe, so I gave her a random name like Komoe. As of now, I regret that decision a bit. Well, I think it sounds better than Tomoe-mini though.

When I look at the window, I see a thin light from between the curtains. It's probably early in the morning. Also, thinking about the time, I feel like it is a bit too cool. Damn Asora. Did you change seasons again?

However… seriously, how many days has it been since then? I think it is probably 1 or 2 days. I bled a bit, but it wasn't to the point I would die. Anyways, I was somehow able to return to Asora on my own after all.

On my own huh.

Dragon killer Sofia. She was strong. How to say it, I felt like she had a human-like strength. In terms of strength and speed, I have met numerous people who were several times stronger, but it was more like the way she used that strength. In that situation it would be her equipment and magic maybe.

Things like being able to change her position with

Lancer's blades, or justthe ability to change her own position freely. Or maybe it was something that didn't take in mind anything, a teleportation-kind of skill. The thing is, she was able to act while ignoring the distance to a certain extent. For a person specialized in long-distance attacks like me, this is a topic that brings pain to my head.

It may be a bit rude to say this but, it was scarier than the time with Tomoe or Mio. If they told me she was over level 2,000, I would believe it. For that to be level 920, it would be dangerous to accept that number in face value. "Well that applies to you too", is what I feel someone would retort.

Attacks that take advantages of openings. I didn't think this style of fighting would create such a disadvantage for barrier magic. Maybe it is because the parts that you are not conscious about are easier to break through.

Or is it just because Sofia's weapon is abnormal? She is a person that has passed through a lot of experiences so it might be possible.

If I didn't have [Sakai], if my magic power was lower, if I didn't have the equipment of the eldwas; if only one of those were missing, in the worst case, I might have died.

Now that I think about it, the time I have learned magic is not even 1 year. I am an amateur among amateurs. If I compare my current self to the me that only had 1 year of experience in archery, I can clearly understand this. The time when I couldn't even hold a bow properly. It was in a stage where I couldn't mind about hitting the target.

Even if it was for the sake of hiding my magic power, I am truly glad I prioritized defense when I came to this world.

No matter if my magic power is as deep as the sea, there is no point if I only have a scoop and bucket to barely use some of it. Even if I still can't use the whole sea, I have to learn how to use a part of it or it will just be a waste.

To have a limit in my crazy amount of power and only being able to use a minuscule part of it. I am not a maso, so I don't want to have close fights all the time.

As expected, heading to Academy Town was the right choice. It's just that this happened before I went there. If they say it's because of my bad luck, I would believe it.

Problem huh. This time it is troublesome that I don't even know where I was and how I fought. The reason I was thrown in that place, is probably because of that voice. What about "finding" you bastard Goddess. Because of her convenience, she threw me in the middle of a battle between hyumans and demons. After throwing me into a wasteland now you throw me into a battlefield. I will label you an evil God seriously.

Going through the trouble of doing that and not providing any instructions or support, she really likes to take me for a fool. If there is a next summon, I will definitely oppose it. Well even if I say so, I will leave most of it to my retainers. In terms of space movement, from Tomoe, Mio and Shiki; which one is more fit? It's probably Tomoe. But if it's about resisting magic, Mio is also a valid option.

Let's ask when they wake up. I have to make sure Tomoe and Mio don't look for retribution as well. No, it isn't because fighting is not good. I also have things to think about so I am just leaving the fun for later.

Ah right, Shiki. Where is Shiki? If I remember correctly, I was supposed to teleport to some town called Felika. Well, if he went to the Academy just like that, I will be able to arrive there too. Really, to be able to open mist gates in the locations of my retainers, it is quite convenient.

Before Felika… Uhm, the town I was before being forced to the battlefield, Ube-something. Instead of heading there and do the teleport again, it is more comfortable to just directly arrive to Academy Town.

Even when he looks like that, Shiki is actually the worrying type, so maybe he came back here. Let's try contacting him once and see.

(Shiki, good morning) (Makoto)

I am glad. It seems the link has been restored. I can clearly tell that we are connected.

Confirming that the thought transmission has connected, I try to call him out. Thought transmission is so user-friendly.

(Makoto-sama? Is it Makoto-sama?!) (Shiki)

(Yeah, it is. I am sorry for suddenly disappearing) (Makoto)

From Shiki's point of view, he didn't know what

happened to me at all so for now I just tell him I disappeared.

(No need to apologize! What about your body? Is there anything wrong with it?) (Shiki)

(Yeah, just a bit sluggish. Just in case I will have you check later. Where are you right now?) (Makoto)

Eh? I feel like I am forgetting something.

(That's great, truly great. I was right beside you and was unable to do anything. If Makoto-sama didn't return after this, I would have-!) (Shiki)

(Shiki, I am asking you where you are right now though) (Makoto)

(Ah, I am really sorry! Right now I am in Academy Town, at the examination line. I thought it would be bad to take out the documents before knowing if Makoto-sama was okay, but after hearing that the day before yesterday you returned to Asora injured, I consulted with Tomoe and here I am) (Shiki)

Tomoe huh. Her decisions are like that of a father or more accurately saying, rational. She probably noticed that my injuries would heal properly alone and thought about when I needed to return, so she made Shiki stay there. A more through treatment can be done when I reunite with Shiki there.

I feel like Mio repeatedly told Shiki to come back and heal me, heal me right this instant no questions asked.

Fumu…

I returned the day before yesterday with injuries. Shiki told me. In that case, I have been sleeping for two days huh. Eh, I was in a pretty serious state?

Ah, injury!

Fingers!

Remembering my pretty severe injury, I take both of my hands out to confirm.

That purple thing which made one feel sick just looking at it, where is it now? Now there is only a healthy-looking left arm and hand.

My fingers are all there. They move normally. Actually, I have been using them naturally to move the blanket. Hah~, I may have just woken up, but I really am not in tune. I am airheaded right now.

But…

I-I am glad~~~!!!

And, Shiki said something about lining up? Examination line?

(Hey, Shiki. What is that examination line you are talking about?) (Makoto)

(Ah, to enter Rotsgard a test is necessary. It's the line you have to wait in order to take it. There should be other methods aside from this inefficient way though. At this rate, Makoto-sama's exam will probably take place in 6 days) (Shiki)

Certainly, if you have a turn ticket, there would be no need to line up. I feel like just by lining up, people steadily leave because they grow tired. I don't think that is their objective, right?

I see~. An exam huh. I thought that because of Rembrandt-san's recommendation, I would be able to enter easily just by doing an interview. Well, the self-proclaimed difficult test of merchants was just a duty education. I shouldn't worry too much. In the worst case, as long as I am able to obtain knowledge in that town, there isn't that much of a need for me to get involved with students. For the sake of Rembrandt-san, let's properly take that test.

6 days huh. I don't know how big this town is with my own eyes, but there seems to be enough time to check the place around.

(I see. Hey Shiki, you are really diligent you know) (Makoto)

(Wa?) (Shiki)

(Well, you said you use hypnosis and suggestion. So I was thinking, why are you diligently lining up?) (Makoto)

(?!!)

(I am sure it is just because you are trying to give a good impression for my sake though. You are pretty honest) (Makoto)

(……)

(Now then, Shiki. I will be going there now so…)

(Makoto)

(Y-Yes) (Shiki)

Shiki's behavior is a bit strange. Could it be he didn't get to sleep? It's this early in the morning and he was still able to answer this fast, so maybe he did an all-nighter. I am sorry for the trouble.

To be able to line up all night is truly incredible. Now that I mention it, in my previous world there were classmates that never missed a festival that was held in a certain place in Tokyo. Even though it was called the "haunt of wicked men" or "hell", they still talked about it with smiles for some reason.

Tto.

Let's quickly change clothes. I have made them worry after all. Shiki and everyone.

After changing, I will wake everyone up and tell them that I am alright. And then I will have Shiki do a thorough check and have a tour on Academy Town.

At night we will have a meeting in Asora for detailed reports. Let's make a mist gate in Academy Town where people can't see. It seems just by setting a gate once I am able to move from Asora to that place.

However, if it is totally closed it will vanish, so I have to leave remnants. Thinking about the possibility of infiltration, I have ordered Tomoe to completely close them. In places that work as relay points and in a base we will normally transit; in those cases we guard the exits with all we have. Mio is also able to open and close

the mist gates that are not completely closed. Shiki still isn't able to do it. It seems he is having a pretty hard time with it.

The former Lich that possesses a reasonable amount of knowledge and ability is like this. Well, I might just be worrying too much though. A genius level instinct type like Mio might appear and could end up able to pass through them, so in most of the cases I want them to be closed completely to have peace of mind.

Ah wait. In the Academy team it is only me and Shiki so there is probably no need to leave a gate in the meantime. I just need to open and close when necessary.

After arranging my thoughts… I feel gazes.

Moreover, from both sides.

"Waka!"

"Waka-sama!"

I was only able to catch those words. After that I wasn't able to understand anything else. The words of Mio that felt like they weren't even words and the words of Tomoe that were actually words but were so fast I couldn't understand. What is sure is that me changing clothes has become a pretty distant future now.

Being hugged by beauties from both sides should be a pretty rewarding situation and yet, the feelings of worrying them and wanting to say sorry were stronger. It's been a few months since I met them, but we have passed quite the thick times together.

(Shiki, I am sorry. I might take quite a bit of time going there) (Makoto)

(… Understood. Please don’t push yourself) (Shiki)

I receive words of worry from Shiki.

“Tomoe, Mio. Good morning. It seems I have worried you both, I am sorry” (Makoto)

At this rate, the report meeting feels like it will be in a much later time. I decide to change the schedule a bit.

Chapter 79: Mio In The Middle Of A Trip

“Mitsurugi you say? That brat, he wasn’t dead huh” (Tomoe)

One could tell Tomoe’s slight surprise from her words. I was somehow able to detach myself from them and tell them the situation, but, as expected, the two of them were quite angered.

“Probably. Also, he was with Dragon Killer that supposedly killed him” (Makoto)

First of all, I have to tell them everything. If I stop all the time to soothe them, I will never end.

“I still don’t know that part yet, I just know that the battlefield the Goddess kidnapped Waka to, is probably one of the battles in order to capture Stella Fortress. It seems it was an awful battle. I heard a big part of the hyumans died. But well, I see, Mitsurugi did that to Waka… Hoh~, fumu…” (Tomoe)

Ignoring Tomoe who is narrowing her eyes in a dangerous way…

I see, Stella Fort huh. It’s a name I haven’t heard before.

Certainly, it was the construction that had the most amount of people around. So that was the fortress huh. I took notice of it when I was high in the skies so it was on the moment I was about to return. In the end it became a losing fight for the hyumans huh.

If people like Sofia are in the demons side, I can understand. That was a scary living being. My last attack was probably only useful as pestering.

Experiencing a place where people kill people is a first in my life, now that I think about it. Not as a spectator but as a concerned party. It may be too late to say it now, but it was scary.

“I see. That Goddess threw me into an outrageous place. Moreover, the moment she found me, she didn’t even say anything! I seriously thought I would die!” (Makoto)

“Doing something like that to Waka-sama, how dare her… Goddess, unforgivable” (Mio)

Mio is now in a state where conversation won’t get through her. She is in a trip of her own. Her eyes have lost color and are completely still. It is a state where her ears are not working properly.

She won’t suddenly go rampage, so there is no need to soothe her for now.

“However, to cause so much trouble for Waka, just how did they do it? With that equipment and magic power, it isn’t something that one can defeat. But it is true that you were severely injured. Wumu” (Tomoe)

“It is because of my negligence and lack of knowledge. I think these were the reasons. Suddenly being thrown in the battlefield and suddenly encountering such a monster, I was in a total state of panic” (Makoto)

I was in a terrible state where not only did I not deploy numerous magic, I wasn’t even able to properly put up a

barrier.

“Fumu…” (Tomoe)

“It was a woman that swung around a sword bigger than her own body and was even able to slice twice in midair. On top of that, I don’t know if it was instant movement ability, but she was able to ignore distance as much as she wanted. It made me think that I have to learn how to deploy a barrier as fast as possible and increase the amount of magic power I can use at once. In my current state, I am unable to use my advantages to their best” (Makoto)

“The amount of magic power you can use huh. Certainly. Setting aside the purity and density, Waka normally doesn’t seem like you are using that much magic power. It’s a changed magic with high effectiveness but in terms of aggregate amount, it certainly would be best to be able to form magic on the level of several rings. The time when you were against Mio, Waka had a different atmosphere there too” (Tomoe)

Yeah. Taking into account the amount of magic power I have, the amount I can use is way too low. Only having it is really a waste.

“I think that if I learn the basics in the magic academy, things will change a bit. I will try asking Shiki over there as well” (Makoto)

“… About that. I think that it would be better if we also accompany you there. We don’t know when the Goddess will interfere again. Her saying “found you” must mean that she has been looking for you over there and was able

to find you” (Tomoe)

“…”

“Please reconsider” (Tomoe)

I understand the concerns of Tomoe. Even I, if an important friend or family suddenly disappears and returns injured, I would worry as well. I think it is best to strive in not making something like that happen again.

“Tomoe, I am definitely worried about the Goddess, but it is because of that that I don’t want you and Mio who she probably doesn’t know of yet, to hide their existence in Asora. She probably already knows about Shiki now, so instead of making him return, I think it is better to have him stay with me. Just like what I asked you, I want you to research for a way to oppose the summoning of the Goddess. It is also because I want to leave people I can count on in Tsige” (Makoto)

That’s right. I was kidnapped on the magic transfer formation, so Shiki’s existence might have been exposed. But if she discovers the existence of Tomoe and Mio as well, before learning a way to oppose her summon, I feel like she will kidnap me and dry me up.

In that case, I want to hide the two of them. I don’t know if good fortune will come out of this or a misfortune, but I don’t like having the Goddess know all my cards.

“Fuh~ a function to negate the interference of the Goddess and the creation of something so the thought transmission isn’t obstructed. If Waka is able to summon us immediately, the problems will be mostly resolved, so

tackling both problems is more efficient. Yareyare, there are only difficult problems. However, I feel honored that Waka thinks of us as trump cards. For the sake of the day to come, we will remain in obscurity for now" (Tomoe)

"Sorry for the trouble. When I arrived at that battlefield, I was unable to feel the connections of anyone. Also the thought transmission was in a suspended state. I was really panicked. It is probably the Goddess' fault, but the ring that Sofia used later also picked my interest" (Makoto)

"The first time was probably because of the Goddess' barrier, but the reason why it was restored for a second and then returned to the previous state might be because something obstructed the interference of the Goddess. The information we need to collect is way too much. I can't ask you to let me go there and investigate in more detail either" (Tomoe)

The words "restored for a second" of Tomoe interested me. I also want to know about what happened as a whole in that battlefield. Well, me going to the actual place to investigate right now feels like a poor move, so I refrain from that.

"Sorry for counting on you for everything. For the time being I will also do my best in regards to summoning everyone. I promise that if there is a time it is okay to rampage, I will definitely call you both" (Makoto)

Sorry for pushing all the troublesome things to you *dad* <Referring to Tomoe as a parent figure>. In terms of countermeasures against the Goddess, the only thing I can think of is pulling my bow as much as I want and

obtain magic power surpassing hers. Right now my equipment is able to hide my magic power so maybe I should do it.

Ah~, I want to shoot.

“I am looking forward to that. Nevertheless, I don’t want to feel that liver wrenching sensation again, so please prioritize a summon route. It is okay if it’s just my needless anxiety but please, instead of using magic formations to mobilize, use Asora. We will manage the increase of gates on this side” (Tomoe)

“Ah, okay” (Makoto)

No good. I was showing withdrawal symptoms from my lack of archery. Even if I was unable to eat or sleep, I never missed a time with my bow after all. More like, it is a given. Now that it has come to this, I will not restrain myself.

“The battle between hyumans and demons is still far north. Fumu, in that case we need a detached force for the battlefield verification huh” (Tomoe)

“I will leave it to you. If it is Tomoe’s personal selection, I can have peace of mind” (Makoto)

Let’s flatter her a bit. I have been asking her a lot after all. Also, if it is Tomoe, there isn’t that much worries about throwing the job to the wrong personnel and cause a big mess. I may be overestimating her though.

“Thank you for your graceful words. Also, can you have a word with Mio as well?” (Tomoe)

With a quite troubled face, Tomoe points out Mio. Her face is telling me she doesn't want to deal with her.

"…"

Mio huh. Her miasma is unnaturally thick right now and I really don't want to get close. Maybe I should tell her to think countermeasures along with Tomoe in order for this to not repeat again?

Hmph.

Yeah!

But I refuse!

Ignore ignore!

"Go and wake her up Tomoe. Shiki is waiting for me so I will be going now. It is pitiful to make him line up alone right? Shiki doesn't know the situation at all too" (Makoto)

"… As you will. When you return, there will be a surprise so be careful. Also, lying is no good. The first one you made contact with was Shiki right?" (Tomoe)

"W-Well, I would be grateful if you don't think too much about the order. There was no deeper meaning in me contacting Shiki first after all" (Makoto)

Surprise she says. What a bad feeling those words give! At least say look forward to it. Moreover, for some reason she knows that I have done thought transmission with Shiki.

But I don’t want to get close to the current Mio. Tomoe’s surprise will probably be in a scope profitable for me, so for now I will endure. If things get busy at the Academy, I don’t know when I will be able to return. Leaving aside the surprise, I am looking forward to the reports of what they did while I was in the academy.

But for now it would be better to be cautious about the Goddess in terms of communication. Mobilizing by mist, I can’t really hold back from that one. They are way too convenient. I can’t use them as frequently now, but mobilizing with them is something I will probably be doing. It doesn’t seem like the Goddess has noticed that I am using Asora as an intermediary to move. Probably the Goddess knows all the actions I did at that time, or maybe not. In that case, it is about that bug, she would probably come to me saying a word of complain or two. If she is not coming, it is probably safe to say she doesn’t know yet.

Yareyare, I haven’t entered Academy Town and it is already like this.

No matter which is the case, what I have to do is polish myself. Let’s go strengthen myself for anti-Goddess measures. Before even learning about hyumans and magic, that Goddess might once again drag me into some trouble.

Geez.

In time, there will be no need for you to look for me, I will be the one going to you, so sit your ass and wait there. The things I want to do, want to aim for; if I am able to at least clear those, there is no need to stay

hidden anymore.

No matter if I stand out or not, I will continue business and search for information about my parents.

“U-Uhm!”

When I was about to head to the Academy, a new voice calls me out. From PE sit to a firm and upright posture, a single girl holding her loved katana with both hands like embracing it, was there.

“Ah, Komoe-chan. Did I wake you up? Sorry” (Makoto)

“Waka-sama, please don’t push yourself and have a safe trip!” (Komoe)

You are a kid so it is okay to not force yourself to use polite language. Well, having a small girl doing her best talking is something that brings a smile to my face though.

“Okay, I will be going now. If Komoe-chan is being bullied by Tomoe, tell me okay?” (Makoto)

Waving my hand at her, I pass through the mist gate.

“Komoe will do her best!” (Komoe)

Komoe is tightly holding a long sword bigger than her. I didn’t hold that many conversations with the first generation. Because I thought the consciousness of the clones were shared with the original body. But Komoe holds a separate consciousness from Tomoe. The first generation didn’t hold that many conversations with Tomoe either and seemed to be doing decisions, so I

misunderstood. Or maybe Komoe is different. But I don't intend to confirm this. I will treat her as a completely different person. That's fine for me.

Taking that into account, I am probably treating her kindly. Even when I know this won't atone for the death of the first generation.

Ah~ but…

If Tomoe were this polite with me it would be nice~.

I grasp the position of Shiki.

"… Waka, I like samurais but… I wish you to stop the pedophilia" (Tomoe)

"Like hell I am!!" (Makoto)

The words that Tomoe said with a slightly serious face, I thoroughly deny them.

The last words of her wore me out a bit, but I still continue to head out to Academy Town.

Chapter 80: Normal Operations Of Asora

“Now that Waka has gone. Mio, how long do you plan to stay like that?” (Tomoe)

The moment Makoto was enveloped in mist and disappeared, the voice of Tomoe reverberates in the room where Makoto isn’t anymore.

But the words that were directed at the black haired girl Mio were not answered and she just continued biting her thumb nail while mumbling words in a low voice. Tomoe seems to have given up on waiting for her answer and turns to her clone, Komoe, who is standing at the entrance.

“Komoe, you don’t have to guard the room’s door anymore. Go play with the forest ogres, I will be going there later” (Tomoe)

“Ah, yes! Understood, Tomoe-sama” (Komoe)

“You remember what I told you right?” (Tomoe)

“Of course! If I cut, heal it” (Komoe)

“Good. Then, I am counting on you… What is it?” (Tomoe)

“Tomoe-sama, there is something I want to ask” (Komoe)

“Tell me” (Tomoe)

“What does “pedophilia” mean?” (Komoe)

“… In time I will tell you. Right now it’s too soon. Now, don’t let the forest ogres do nothing” (Tomoe)

“Y-Yes, understood! I will be going now!” (Komoe)

Komoe does a big nod and walks out. Tomoe watches her out. Seeing the opened door, the dwarfs, orcs, lizards and Arkes must have noticed a change in the situation, they peeked inside the room. Tomoe smiles wryly at the residents that show worry at Makoto’s well-being. That the forest ogres also came to check, surprised her a bit. Because she thought they would be firmly waiting at the training grounds. She thought she had cornered them to the very limit, but it seems they still have some leeway, so Tomoe decided to change their menu a bit.

“Uhm, how is Makoto-sama?”

One of the orcs says in a really reserved manner. It is the orc chief’s daughter who does the administration and management in Asora, Ema. She is wise and it seems that her negotiation skills were originally high, she was able to act around the other races without feeling any sort of barrier between them. A capable woman. Moreover, her loyalty to Makoto is high. Tomoe and Mio respect Ema.

“Ah, Ema huh. If it’s Waka, he woke up a few moments ago. He told me to tell everyone that he is alright” (Tomoe)

“But I don’t see him around” (Ema)

“I had him go to the Academy where Shiki is. Because it is better if he checks him in detail. There is no one here that has experience in treating a human after all. Shiki

who was a former hyuman, is the best one for the job right?" (Tomoe)

"… You are right. Understood. Will he be coming back at night?" (Ema)

"Let's see, I don't know about tonight, but let's have him come back soon in order to show everyone his well-being. Those dwarfs over there, I am a bit doubtful if they are worried about Waka's well-being or the equipments' well-being though" (Tomoe)

Tomoe sneaks a look at the dwarfs there and narrows her eyes.

"U-Unthinkable! We are also worried about Waka's well-being at foremost!"

"I see, I see, I understand that. Anyways, for now tell the other people at the village that Waka is alright. The lizards and Arkes as well, alright?" (Tomoe)

Everyone nods at Tomoe's words. And following her words, they began acting and leave from the door.

"Yareyare, what a troublesome bunch. However, understanding how much Waka is loved makes me a bit happy as well" (Tomoe)

"Waka-sama?! Waka-sama isn't here?!" (Mio)

"… Mio. You finally woke up huh" (Tomoe)

"Tomoe-san, where is Waka-sama?!" (Mio)

Seeing Mio who is instantly desperate, Tomoe makes a

wry smile. After returning from her trip, she is like this. The pain of her master Makoto, even if only a part, Tomoe understood it.

“He went to Academy Town. While you were murmuring” (Tomoe)

“W-What did you say?!” (Mio)

Mio, who was sitting on the bed, stands up vigorously. But after that she may have felt anemia or something, she staggered and placed a hand on her head.

“H-Hot…” (Mio)

“Fool. After doing so much regeneration, your magic power and stamina will not return so fast. Just stay there and obediently recover” (Tomoe)

The voice of Tomoe that sounded amazed. However, taking a closer look, the color of her face wasn’t that good either. And just as how Mio was, she also sat down at the bed.

“Uh, how pathetic. Even though I want to go and kill that so called Dragon Killer and Superior Dragon as soon as possible…” (Mio)

“We are not healing specialists. Doing something outside our expertize, it is obvious we would become like this” (Tomoe)

“That’s why it would have been better to call Shiki here. That thing is useful if it’s for healing after all” (Mio)

“Don’t say that. Anyways, by the time I hurriedly came

when I heard the report of Komoe, there was already one person unreasonably casting regeneration spells on him" (Tomoe)

"T-That is…" (Mio)

"Even if I was able to remove the curse that was hindering his recovery in the middle to follow up on your spell and somehow were able to return him to his original state, who knows what kind of compensation you would have to take if you were to try and heal Waka alone" (Tomoe)

Tomoe sighs. By the time she ran there, Mio was clearly distressed. She even felt a madness in her bloodshot eyes, the eyes of someone that would pay any price in order to achieve their objective.

"… I don't care about the price I would have to take" (Mio)

Even though she was reflecting on her actions, she didn't regret them. That is what Mio's face said.

"What a troublesome one you are. And so you are telling me it would be fine to lose an arm?" (Tomoe)

In a joking tone Tomoe asks Mio, but Mio made a surprised face and looks back at her.

"Of course. If that would heal him" (Mio)

"…"

"Even if I were to become an empty-shell, I would be satisfied-desu. Because my everything belongs to Waka-

sama” (Mio)

Mio calmly tells her that even if she lost all her limbs, it would still satisfy her. Tomoe makes a big sigh.

“… You are really an idiot-ja” (Tomoe)

“A-About what-desu?! Also, isn’t Tomoe saying “idiot idiot” way too much?!” (Mio)

“To a point that it is still not enough. You may be satisfied by that, but if he were to see your deed and your appearance, Waka would cry” (Tomoe)

“Eh?” (Mio)

“Try to think about it. We are in a ruling relationship with Waka. In normal terms, we would have to absolutely follow his orders. Our movements and will would be as Waka wishes. Even so, he gave us this much freedom and lets us do as we want. It is a kind treatment that is no different from a covenant. He probably doesn’t think he is ruling us. He probably thinks of us as companions, family” (Tomoe)

“Companions, family…” (Mio)

“Right. That’s how much he treasures us. That’s why it is proper to be ready to throw away our everything for Waka, but we also have to stay healthy in order to serve Waka the best we can. As long as we stay with him, take care of your own body” (Tomoe)

“…”

“Oi, are you listening Mio? I am telling you something

pretty important here you know?” (Tomoe)

“You… Saying all that even though you went and picked a fight on a high ranking dragon in who knows where……” (Mio)

Mio, with her head hanging down, mumbles these words while looking at Tomoe.

“Uuugh?!” (Tomoe)

“You said something about Root right? And you went to pick a fight with him-desu. While pushing me the job of staying here. That isn’t something that would worry Waka? Is it okay for me to report this to Waka-sama?” (Mio)

“T-That is…” (Tomoe)

“Hmph, just because by chance the person in question wasn’t present and couldn’t meet him, doesn’t change the fact that you tried to do it. I will clearly report this” (Mio)

“W-Wait. I also said a bit too much. My feelings of worry about Waka made me a bit impertinent. Umu, it isn’t strange for me to become like this. That why, you see, don’t go betraying me like that okay?” (Tomoe)

“Who cares. I am stupid after all. Someone like Tomoe-san should have her period dramas sealed for a while-desu wa” (Mio)

“Y-Yoooouu~ what kind of scary things are you saying? Ah, I know-ja. Later, I will be going to the place where Waka battled. And so, when I get information about that

Dragon Killer and Mitsurugi, the first one I will tell will be Mio. And after, we can secretly rampage a bit without telling Waka… or something like that" (Tomoe)

"… And?" (Mio)

"And?!" (Tomoe)

"…"

"Umu, I understand! Also I will cooperate in compiling the videos you were interested in. How about that?" (Tomoe)

"… Really?" (Mio)

"There is no turning back in a samurai's words" (Tomoe)

"Then, I will forgive you for calling me an idiot. Now go and investigate the place where Waka fought quickly please" (Mio)

"Y-Yes, understood" (Tomoe)

(Well, I was also thinking about giving that brat my thanks for what he did anyways. Accompanying Mio to rampage a bit might prove fun) (Tomoe)

The secret talk of Tomoe and Mio, surprisingly ended in Mio turning the tables. While doing what Makoto asked them to do, the two retainers decided on an ominous thing secretly.

By the time both of them were able to move their bodies, the sun was already high up in the sky. Asora was somehow able to operate normally.

Chapter 81: Misunderstanding

Several days passed after reuniting with Shiki. Being freed from the line, he accompanied me to tour the streets of Academy Town.

This town has a city smell that Tsige didn't have. I was enjoying the townscape constructed mainly of stone.

As expected of Academy Town. Maybe it is because a lot of people from different lands gather here, the lined up goods and the attires of the people walking had a strong sense of individuality. It has a wideness that Tsige didn't have and I was able to stroll without getting tired.

Right now I am in the middle of that.

Suddenly, I stop my feet.

"What happened Raidou-sama?" (Shiki)

"Nothing, is what I want to say but, that…" (Makoto)

Signaling with my eyes, I point out a group of 5 quarreling with a woman. The sight of people picking on the weak isn't something strange in Academy Town.

But for that weak to be a hyuman is unusual. It would be one thing if we were in a special environment like in the Zeno base, but in Tsige I didn't see something like that happen.

With a demi-human, it is quite the normal happening though. In the middle of a journey or in here where the teachings of the Goddess are sufficiently strong, the

standing of the demi-humans is low. As that bug would say, the demi-humans are failed products of hyumans and they only exist because of God's compassion, so they should serve the completed product, the hyumans. Is that bug serious? To think the teachings itself were crooked as well.

"Ah, it is probably extortion or something of the sort" (Shiki)

"Who knows, isn't that just bullying?" (Makoto)

"Bullying huh. Yeah, it does look that way" (Shiki)

Shiki doesn't seem to be that interested. Well, I am probably worrying too much because I came from another world.

Now that I think about it, when I told Shiki that I came from another world and told him about the things regarding the Goddess, he made quite the ruckus. It was to the point that I was beginning to doubt if all his vocabulary was gone except for the words unbelievable, incredible, impossible. He repeated those words while walking around in the narrow room.

His eyes were glittering like the time when Tomoe used me as an intermediary to peek at my memories.

Luckily, at the present time he is not hooked into any videos yet. It would be troublesome if he gets a weird hobby, but it is natural to feel something after touching a different culture, so there might be some sort of influence in him. I am already prepared for it. If Shiki does a rebirth, I will accept him… As long as he doesn't awaken

to BL ＜Boys Love＞.

“Bullying between hyumans isn’t something I have seen, so I will go and take a look for a bit” (Makoto)

“Raidou-sama?” (Shiki)

It isn’t because the one being bullied is a girl. It’s just… those eyes.

Those eyes haven’t gone cold, nor are the eyes of someone that has given up, or ones that are warped. Just what are they? I was a bit interested.

“Oi, say something!”

I exchange looks with Shiki. That there is another person who can talk for me is something reassuring.

“Ah, can you leave it at that?” (Shiki)

No no, why are you asking them in question form. Shiki, at these times you have to be cool and assertive.

“… Who are you guys?”

“Oioi, can’t you see these clothes? Are you guys stupid?”

The idiot said something. Clothes? Ah, all of them are wearing the same clothes. Or more like, those are clothes I have seen quite a lot since I came here.

I can think of the reason why.

(Is it okay to kill them, Makoto-sama?) (Shiki)

(Wait!) (Makoto)

(Stupid? He called ME stupid? Or could it be… at Makoto-sama? Ah, this is death sentence right. Understood) (Shiki)

(Don't understand it! It is fine to just look at them with painful eyes and push those words aside! Don't suddenly go killing! Understand?!) (Makoto)

(Aw. U-Understood) (Shiki)

Aw, he says. Tomoe is fine but, will Mio be fine? I hope she isn't going around killing. Tomoe is accompanying her, so I trust that they won't do anything excessive. I believe in them!

"Anyways, all of you get lost. Feel lucky I won't be killing you" (Shiki)

Ah, their clothes are probably uniforms. They must be students at the Academy. There are a number of colors for it, but the design is practically the same.

This is something that makes me wonder, are the heroes and me the first ones to come here?

The blazers really look alike. Is that coincidence? It is more convincing for me if someone has already come and told them the design.

I don't think all worlds have the same school uniforms.

Tte.

(Shiki, are you not good in conversations?) (Makoto)

(No. But I am not good at dealing with idiots) (Shiki)

Ah, I see.

He is thoroughly picking a fight. Those people might become my classmates.

That they are exaggerating the importance of the clothes might be because the students here are pretty high standing? When talking about students that are still studying a lot of subjects, in terms of society, their standing should normally be low.

Because if I said something like: “Can’t you see this uniform? I am a high school student you know?” in my common sense, people would without a doubt treat me as crazy.

Is the position of a student higher because we are in Academy Town? If it’s because the town is specialized in scholarship and research, making engineers and researchers’ position higher, I would understand. But to put the students that are just the unhatched eggs in such a high pedestal, is like putting up a mountain of people.

“Don’t mess around with us!”

It seems from his palms, magic power is gathering. A spell huh.

In an incredibly slow speed, moreover, making a loud aria that everyone can hear. This isn’t a kindergarten sports event you know.

[Sorry, but is this some sort of performance?]

If they are trying to begin a show, then this kind of aria is okay but the situation right now is a fight.

That's why I wrote these words with my honest feelings. However, it seems I truly made them angry. They glared at me with intensity.

(So Makoto-sama is joining the fray) (Shiki)

(You are totally misunderstanding) (Makoto)

"Wa! So fast!"

Shiki finishes an aria for earth element magic. Or more like, it is the normal speed. As expected of students, they don't know how the real world works. If you continue like that, a scary woman will cut you to pieces you know?

Shiki hits the ground with his staff that's enveloped in black light. It's a staff the eldwas barely made in time and I gave to him apologetically. It seems the efficiency is pretty high and the moment Shiki took it in his hands, his eyes were wide open.

The guysall went gyaaa and waaa.

The five of them screamed in a way that lacked individuality and it reverberated in the streets. Seriously, learn of the hoodlums in Tsige.

From the feet of the student-looking people, a pillar of stone made from Shiki's magic protruded out and invited them to the sky. The bullied girl looks like she is inside that stone pillar prison. Oops, maybe I should have wrote something. To suddenly be surrounded by stone pillars of several meters is something that might be scary for her.

Well~ they are splendidly towering. For now let's

remove them. It troubles the people around after all. The passersby are starting to make a ruckus about what is going on.

I gently touch the stone pillars.

Grasp the linked magic composition and reverse it. I find the part that serves as a core and destroy it with darkness.

As if it didn't even exist to begin with, the numerous pillars disappear. Now, what will the people who were thrown to the sky do? They seem to be able to use magic, maybe? Different from me, one of them should be able to use wind magic.

"Splendidly done. It won't be long before counter-spell is complete" (Shiki)

It would be great if that happens. I made an ambiguous smile at Shiki in response. Negating the magic of an acquaintance and a magic I already know of, won't bring much results. There are people like Sofia, so my enthusiasm in completing magic negation is slowly fading.

[Are you okay? If you are able to read this, I don't know about the reason, but since we have involved ourselves in it already, it would be great if you run away]

"Eh, a…"

The girl is surprised by the writing appearing in front of her. Maybe she is a waiter. It isn't maid clothes, but she is wearing an apron, has frills, and other parts that make me think she has a job in that kind of area.

She was looking at the men that were in the sky and letters suddenly appeared in front of her, so maybe I scared her.

… The strange light she had in her eyes was already gone. Too bad. Well, that's fine. In the end, it was just interest.

"I didn't ask to be saved"

So she can read, I see. Then I can communicate with her.

[I didn't do this aiming for a reward or anything. We might never meet again so don't worry about it]

"…"

[Hurry and go]

"I am working as a waiter in the Gotetsu local that's close to here. I live there while working, so please come when you have the time. I will at least repay you"

[If I feel like it]

The girl runs off. The netted hair that was long enough to hide her shoulders waved busily. Gotetsu huh. Will there be nabe＜japanese hot pot＞? When things have calmed down, I should try visiting it once. The food in this world is lightly flavored, but it is pretty delicious so I am looking forward to it.

"For someone that has been saved, she is quite rude" (Shiki)

"Really? Suddenly appearing and doing something

beneficial for her. Wouldn't there be people that suspect this person of having underhanded motives? There was also someone who did a flashy move and gathered a lot of attention after all" (Makoto)

It is a world where there aren't that many chivalrous people. It's no surprise to suspect.

"It was flashy huh. I used a docile spell that wouldn't kill them though" (Shiki)

If the front was pointed, they would have probably died. Docile he says.

"Being that tall, of course it would. Wouldn't burying them grab less attention?" (Makoto)

"Now that you mention it, even when those guys are barking a lot, they aren't floating. Are they looking to die?" (Shiki)

The bunch above have a desperate expression and look like they are using magic but… it seems like they are trying their best to not drop while sweating an incredible amount. They are falling in a questionable way. Won't they run out of strength if they continue like that?

"… Could it be, they can't fly?" (Makoto)

"Then they are just pigs. I pray that their next life will be a happy one" (Shiki)

"… Please save them" (Makoto)

While sighing slightly at my words, Shiki accepted and spreads out a floating magic. The people that were

caught in that area, slowed their dropping speed and gently fell… or not. At the last part, they dropped vigorously. Shiki~.

Are you a kid?!

“I will remember this!!”

Ah, how pitiful they look falling on their butt. But can’t they do a roll at least? Didn’t they learn this in physical education?

This is what I think but, is it okay to say that clichéd line while running off? You guys will definitely regret saying that later.

“… Raidou-sama, I know this may be too impertinent of me to say but, to interfere with those kind of events every time they happen, I don’t think it is recommendable. Those are what one would call society happenings. If the basis itself doesn’t disappear, it is pointless to interfere in this one” (Shiki)

“Shiki, it wasn’t pointless. I was satisfied after all. I am aware it is a pastime, but if Shiki wants to correct the pastime of this person, you will have to do so with all you have” (Makoto)

That’s right. It isn’t like I interfered because I thought bullying is bad anyways. I wasn’t able to ask about the reason for those eyes, so even if it was a pastime, I still have to reflect on it huh.

“…”

“It isn’t like I am looking to get rid of all the bullying.

And I don't intend to do so. This time was only because I felt like it" (Makoto)

"Raidou-sama…" (Shiki)

"Sorry for being a master that moves around at his own convenience" (Makoto)

"No. I said too much" (Shiki)

"Now then, let's do a good-job party for Shiki who reliably stood in line. After lining up and finishing the reception, they said the test will be in three days. Just how much does one have to wait to do a matriculation exam" (Makoto)

Because Shiki lined up for the test, we were able to finish the reception, but the important test will be in three days from now.

This night we will hold a meal with us two males to celebrate passing those 6 days of boring line up.

"Eh?" (Shiki)

"… What was that "eh?" for, Shiki? The test will be in three days right?" (Makoto)

Shiki made a dumbfounded expression at my words. Why?

"Raidou-sama, what do you mean by matriculation exam?" (Shiki)

"There's no need to ask. It's to matriculate into the academy right?" (Makoto)

Shiki showed the documents Rembrandt arranged for that sake and also the recommendation letter he made. Moreover, Shiki lined up for 6 days for that.

Rotsgard is a place where a lot of people from different lands gather.

It is in the dead center of the country and at its circumference there are numerous towns as if it were a satellite land. Holding various specialized education institutions. By the way, in this center land there is only one institution that holds the same name as Academy Town. It's the representative of the academies, Rotsgard Academy. It seems to be the place where the most promising students gather. The ones a few moments ago were really weird and savory, but they seem to be elite.

And that's how it is.

The attitude of those guys can be translated to that of "Hey we guys are of Tokyo University you know". It doesn't change my impression of them though.

Anyways, the ones that are looking to matriculate here have to take a test, and depending on your skills and specialties, you will be send to a school that is fit for you, is how this place works. Actually, aside from skills and specialties, I think they also take into account their assets and social standing.

"No, I understand that but…" (Shiki)

"What's strange?" (Makoto)

"Raidou-sama intends to take the matriculation exam?" (Shiki)

Isn't that obvious? I nod at him.

"Please listen. What Raidou-sama will take three days from now isn't a matriculation exam" (Shiki)

Eh?

"In the first place, the education institutions' matriculation scale may vary by age but it is something fixed. The school that takes receptions seems to be pretty special" (Shiki)

That's why, isn't the pretty special mammoth school here? Thinking about it in general, to have 1 or 2 years apart is normal.

For an out of norms school that matches the age to still reach the hundreds, it wouldn't be strange right?

"At this place, in this season, they are not taking applications for students, Raidou-sama" (Shiki)

"Then what was Shiki lining up for?" (Makoto)

"For the personnel employment exam" (Shiki)

P-Personnel?! Personnel as in working?! Are you kidding?!

What are you saying so nonchalantly?!

"S-Shiki! I am a merchant that is affiliated to the Merchant Guild, a person with a full-fledged job you know?" (Makoto)

I didn't come here to find a job though?!

“But in the documents I received from Rembrandt-shi, the contents said Raidou-sama was applying to be a tactics specialized teacher” (Shiki)

R-Rembrandt-saaaan!

“Why didn’t you think it was weird after seeing the contents of the document?!” (Makoto)

“For Raidou-sama to become a student is stranger for me. I was like “Oh, so that was the case” and naturally accepted it” (Shiki)

Ooooo. Rembrandt-san, what are you thinking?! Shiki too. I am only 17 you know. Like hell I can work as a teacher!

I should have looked at the contents! But to check the contents of documents… The only application documents I have checked in this world were the ones I got at the merchant guild.

“The recommendation letter. That’s right, what about the contents of the recommendation letter?!” (Makoto)

“Ah. In the recommendation letter, if I remember correctly, it said: “Raidou-sama has a lot of real combat experience in the border of the world. He may have difficulties in speaking, but has no issues in communicating his intentions. Since he is a person with hard to get abilities, I want to ask of you to please accept him even when it isn’t the season” And that’s how it went” (Shiki)

To please accept me even when it isn’t the season? The line for personnel applicants was build up, so isn’t it the

season for it?

… Could it be, Rembrandt-san messed up the document entry? No, there is no way that would happen with him and Morris-san. Specially Morris-san. He looks like the perfect butler type.

“Then, uhm. Three days from now I will be taking an exam to be a tactics specialized teacher?” (Makoto)

“Yes” (Shiki)

The quick affirmation of Shiki.

What does tactic specialized mean? It’s a subject I have never heard before, there is no way I can teach it. With this, I will most likely fail the exam.

There are things I want to research and I want to find a place to open a store here. Being a student is just a thing I wanted to do in the occasion, so being a student or a teacher doesn’t really matter. But even so, a teacher, no way. Teachers are people that teach other people you know?

There’s no way I can do that.

Maybe I should try going to the office and ask if they can change it.

Me feeling in the mood to look at the sky and drink alcohol, was something that would happen a while after.

Chapter 82: Raidou Takes The Test

I feel heavy.

At any rate, I feel heavy.

I was thinking it was obvious I would become a student and didn't confirm the documents and the recommendation letter Rembrandt-san arranged. This may be because I was naïve. But I am still only in my teens. I am aware that even my outward appearance is seen as younger than my actual age. I didn't think even for a second that they would recommend me as a teacher.

The subject called tactics specialized, in simpler words, seems to be a subject that teaches real combat techniques. Honestly speaking, there is no way I can do it.

I have lived in here for a while after coming to this world, but I myself understand that I am a strange existence. With just that one point, I think it is impossible for me to teach techniques. It seems that I am able to do my lectures in the area I am most suited in, but the magic I used, made Lich call me a pervert once.

Just like that, 3 anguishing days passed and yet, I still head to the test location. I had a recommendation letter on top of already making the formalities after all.

Shiki lined up for 6 days too. To invalidate all that is a bit… I tried to ask if they could change the working personnel test, but it seems I can't anyways.

Not only that, they thought I got scared (I actually did

thought) and recommended me to withdraw from the test. When I thought this might be an option as well, Shiki perfectly managed to worsen the situation with the personnel involved.

In the time I was trying to calm the situation, I was made to take the hardest test of all. They said it was a test that one could count the number of people that had passed it.

I was a bit internally happy that the test changed from a written test into a practical one. In short, a test where practical skills is a 10 while written is 0. An extreme barrier, or so it seems.

I think that being able to choose the balance between practical skills and theoretical knowledge is a special system. By the way, in the theoretical 10, it seems one has to do a test of 18 subjects. And after that, an interview.

… That I didn't have an interview at all, might be because of the effects of Rembrandt-san's recommendation letter.

Truly an authority that makes the test bow down.

Well, I have no choice but to do it. I don't know what Rembrandt-san was thinking putting me as a teacher, however, I can't tarnish the name of the person that went through the trouble of writing a recommendation letter for me. He will be relating with Tomoe and the others after all. I at least want him to have peace of mind when working with us.

Uhm.

I remember the explanation of the test. Remembering the interruption of Shiki makes my head hurt, so I just remember the general outline.

Right now I am in a vast field. It seems to be the place where the test will be done, but the scale is on a whole different level. Just how many kilometers is it from each side? Counting me, there are only 4 people taking the test.

Before being send here, we met face to face. From what I saw, they seem to be veteran adventurers and scholars. An elf, a beast and a hyuman. I think they have the same ability as the people who serve as backbone in Tsige. Over there, Tomoe and the others as well as Toa-san's party, their levels increased quite a lot. The next time I visit, they might have increased their level even more. Their levels may increase but I don't know about their skills though.

Well, it is just an assumption but I think they are approximately level 150. They know I have come with a recommendation letter and that I am associated with the merchant guild. I wonder if they will charge me for deception because I hid that I am registered in the adventurer guild as well. Not saying it, is a bit different from lying, but I am a little worried. Still, writing that I am a level 1 is just… Well, it is fine if I answer when they ask. When I wrote that I was a merchant, the personnel in charge had quite the impression.

Ah right, the confirmation of the test's content.

In this field with mountains and valleys, there are three types of spherical objects quite separated from each

other, so the objective is to bring three of them back within 3 days. Everyone who fulfills this, passes. Fighting between us is prohibited. Food will be self-provided.

When I tried to check with Sakai, these three people and I were really the only ones in this field. Moreover, it seems all of us have been send to locations pretty far away between us. With this, unless the examinee intends to, battles should not happen.

However, it's not like the wastelands, but it is possible that they have released wildlife here. I can feel the presence of a number of mamonos. I wonder if the others will be okay. We have been provided with a give-up item, so it might not turn into a worst-case scenario.

What they provided us was a bell in case of danger and a feather-shaped ornament we use to leave when the test is over. If one takes it in his hands and reads the exact words written on it, a door to leave the test field will appear and will be able to return to the place where we received the test explanation. In the end, both of them seem to have practically the same effects, but the fact that they went through the trouble of having us hold the two makes me have a bad feeling.

They also told us about the special characteristics of the three balls. Basically, all of them move at high speed. They showed us a sample and it was pretty fast. It's the size of a fist, floats and from zero it makes an instant acceleration that makes you wonder what the hell happened to inertia. It just gave me the impression that it seems to follow the conventions.

If we are able to deal damage to it and accumulate it,

when a determined line is passed, its movements will stop and one will be able to capture it.

A ball that will be destroyed if hit by magic. A ball that will explode the moment a person gets close to a certain distance. And the last ball will crumble if hit by physical attacks. All attacks aside from those, they possess high defensive capabilities.

There might be a lot of other methods, but what I thought of was: get close and punch it, shoot from a long distance, bring it down with magic. Each one of them is: short-distance physical, long-distance physical and magic.

If we stop their movements, it seems that they will return to normal balls, so it is okay to just put them inside a bag.

I don't want to sleep outdoors in such an empty place, so let's finish this in one day. I am glad it is an easy and anticlimactic test.

However.

I was soon showed that this was an incredibly naïve and fleeting illusion.

I was quickly able to locate the balls with Sakai. This was no problem.

Closing in quite a bit, I grasp the location of the close-distance type with my eyes and use Sakai to acquire the details of the ball. This also passed with no problems.

The problem came after that.

Approaching the punching-type ball, I punch while laughing. It was supposed to stop its movements… but it turned into smithereens.

I shoot the shooting-type ball with the bow I brought with me. Bull's-eye. It was supposed to stop its movements, but it turned into smithereens.

I shoot the magic-type with a brid. Bull's-eye. It was supposed to stop its movements, but same story!

My way of doing it wasn't wrong.

It seems I put too much power. Even though I did it lightly. I was in a mental state where I wanted to shout out not to make lies of it being sturdy.

It makes me suspect that at the front, it may look like a test, but it is actually an absurdity used in order to drive out claimers.

Without being discouraged, this time I lightly pressed my finger while holding back to test it out. Totally destroyed.

Now I do it softly, as if touching a baby. It was unnecessarily tiring for my body, but no choice. Totally destroyed.

……

…

Uuooooooooo!!

My stress is! My stress is not stopping!! It's accelerating and going at Mach speed!! I am balding! It's all going to

disappear in one day!! <RUN! He is transforming into one punch man!>

In the end, the fight with myself that lasted until night, resulted in zero spheres obtained.

When I decided to just go and rest, I search for a random place. In the middle of it, a gorilla-like something attacked me and I left it half-dead. A something that had a long nose like a Tengu, everything else omitted.

In the end, I had to sleep outdoors. Damn it.

The next day.

I was now challenging them with a feather-like touch. Everything hit the target, and then, every single one of them escaped. I didn't hear that they could teleport?!

Could it be… they don't intend to let anyone pass?

Fu… fufufufu~ this region, should I make it scorched earth?!

C-Calm down. Fuh~ Fuh~

In these situations, adults would probably feel the urge to smoke a tobacco with trembling hands. No one around me smokes so I don't know, but if that were the case, I would totally understand that person's feelings.

Tentatively! Tentatively speaking!

I have now understood that I am able to attack them with a feather-touch without destroying them completely. At the third strike it broke but… O-Oh well, I am certainly

doing a step forward!

If I don't take that much time and attack it again, it seems it won't teleport.

Trial and error. This is the only choice huh. Bring it on.

What I lack in talent, I compensate with persistence. Let's do this then. I don't care if it's tactless frankness, there is no problem if I bring out results in two days.

At this moment, the test that I didn't really have that much enthusiasm in, changed into a summit I had to conquer.

After that, I must have destroyed quite a bit of balls. It was already a memory that felt like a nightmare when I think back at it.

By the time the stars took the leading role in the sky.

I was finally able to complete the three types of ball.

I-It took so long. Today I am totally sure I have learned the art of holding back.

With this I can finally return!

But let's leave that for tomorrow.

◇◆◇◆◇◆◇◆

"Ah, Raidou-san. Did you finish gathering them? Or maybe, withdrawing?"

Instant sarcasm huh. The examiner made a complacent smile. His expression irritated me.

I used the feather to return. Can't you confirm it from your side?

[I gathered them. Please confirm]

I hand over the bag to the one in charge. It is now the third day, but I was somehow able to finish. To think I would taste such a mental training. Out of my expectations.

"… Hoh~ you gathered them, you say. Then let me see… T-This is?!"

The person in charge looks at my balls and shows clear agitation. <That is literally how it was written. I left it like that for the giggles>

Was there a rare bonus ball or something? Even if there was one, I didn't have the leeway of aiming at something like that! Not a single bit!

Oya?

The other three people that took the exam at the same time as me were here.

Fast people can return in the first day after all. They must be people with skills surpassing my expectations. I was the only one left at the third day after all.

Anyways, as long as the conditions were met, everyone would be able to pass, so there was no sense of competition. More like, comrades?

It seems it was a harsh test right, everyone.

“Raidou-dono, just what in the world are you?”

N, what’s wrong examiner?

You changed from –san to –dono you know?

I just brought the number of things I was told to bring and returned, so I don’t know the reason to call me –dono.

[I am just a merchant with combat experience though?]

“These balls, there are one of each type. People that have passed this test with this kind of result… there have been none”

Don’t understand what you are trying to say.

You were the one that said there are three types of balls and to bring three here.

……..

But maybe my doubt was the one lacking common sense. The three examinees that had returned first had their eyes wide open and stood up vigorously.

What is weird?

[I thought that was how the test went]

“Yeah. I did say to bring three back. If you were able to capture three of the balls that are incredibly sturdy with the “special method”, it would be okay. And yet, Raidou-dono brought one of each type. That means, you used the three methods in order to capture them. Is that right?”

[Yeah, that's how it is]

"For the academy, this is a test that lets us gauge the abilities of the "specialists" in each area. The other three gave up long ago and returned, and yet, to think someone would appear that would surpass the passing line, bringing all three types"

…

Oh! I see.

So the original objective was to bring three of the same type huh. Maybe I missed something while listening, or it might be because I just let it slip by. So it wasn't to bring one of each type huh!

Now I get it. That's why it was so troublesome. Moreover, the other three gave up. Even though I was doing my best trying to learnhow much I had to hold back… You guys are not my comrades!

"As expected of someone that has survived in the borders of the world. The power you hold is on a different level. I thought the contents of Rembrandt-shi were quite ambiguous unlike him, but if it is like this, I can comprehend. You are able to clearly communicate your intentions with writing and we don't mind if you use your retainer to talk for you. What we judge is the skills and not the outward appearance anyways"

It seems there won't be problems in having Shiki as my assistant. At the end, the person in charge talks about me.

I didn't want to retort about that unnecessary remark of him.

“There are no complains. You pass. Raidou-dono, Academy Town welcomes you as a temporary lecturer. You can choose to be a teacher of a new lecture, or serve as an assistant with the class of another lecturer. Also, taking into consideration your circumstances, we allow your retainer to accompany you”

Telling me that the details will be at a later time, he asked for a handshake. Of course, I accept. A part-time teacher huh. I am glad. If I suddenly become a homeroom teacher, I would die.

Also, he told me it was in Rotsgard Academy. I am glad I don’t have to move to a town in the area and can stay living here.

With this, I might be able to visit the Gotetsu local in a near future. I actually didn’t have any plans of going, but if I am going to be staying in this town for a while, it wouldn’t be a bad idea to go at night. If a bogus nabe appears, I can only laugh. If that happens, it would be nice to bring Tomoe here.

Different from my objective, I have now become a teacher in Rotsgard. Moreover, in the center town that elite students gather.

Like this, our life in Academy Town began.

Chapter 83: Gotetsu

Hey guys, I have changed Forest Ogres to Forest Oni. Yes, this long dispute has finally ended. I won't do mori oni as it just sounds wrong and a real mouthful in my head (When all the other text is in english)

After the test, 6 more days pass.

Calling myself a merchant while in this situation where I am not doing any business and only using money. How vexing.

Luckily for me, I have the products of Asora and the armor of the dwarfs. In a sense, I have items that can turn into gold, so in terms of expenses, I probably don't have to worry that much. It's just, as expected, having money leave my hands only, feels like a waste. I am a commoner, so I can't help feeling like this.

Today, we finally received a notification from the Academy about the inn we will be lodging in. A notification telling me I officially passed and a schedule of how many lectures I have in a week. Also, telling me that they want to visit in order to do a formal contract.

They are not thinking about my convenience. It feels like they are talking from a pretty high position. It probably shows how much influence they have in this land. The contents felt like they are telling me they will be suddenly intruding this afternoon or in the morning two days from now.

"Makoto-sama, is it a notification from the Academy?" (Shiki)

It's Shiki. With two men, there is no need for two rooms. In all of the towns we have travelled, we have stayed in a room with two beds. In this town it is the same. Around him, there are a number of books scattered. He, who loves reading, buys any book he finds interesting when he accompanies me. In this world books are quite high priced, so when I saw the number of books increasing, I asked him if the money was fine. But it seems he has enough savings, so my worries were needless… or not.

Actually, Shiki over-paid. He used stones and jewels filled with magic power as a replacement for money and it was in a quality that a book wouldn't be able to match. I think that doing a sale of stones would have brought out more money, but it seems that Shiki considers knowledge as something that he must obtain no matter how much money he uses. I thought this thought pattern is dangerous. Wasting money is not good.

"It says today in the afternoon or at morning two days from now. I finally will be able to ask about the store. The merchant guild gave me permission to do business, but when I told them about the Academy, they nailed me saying I had to prioritize that. Also, call me Raidou" (Makoto)

"Tto, right, Raido-sama. The building that will be used as store seems to be a good, so we are lucky right" (Shiki)

"Yeah. The previous storekeeper looks polite and seems to be plenty useful. That such a good store went down is a problem though" (Makoto)

When I went to the Merchant Guild to report, look for a building to use as store and a plot of land, the people

related to the Academy took lead and began acting.

In their first greeting they were like that but, maybe it is because Rembrandt-san talked to them about me. Things related to the Merchant Guild proceeded without any problems. They cooperated in looking for a store too, but well, there were a lot of stores available. Ones that were in bad state and also others in good conditions. There were many varied types of stores that were closed.

The ones at the streets were also unique. There were ones that you wouldn't be able to find unless you know they are certainly there and the buildings that went from the town's gate to the academy on that wide street were also varied.

The types of stores were numerous too, but the restaurants and armor stores were especially plentiful. There were also stores for general goods and… Night stores. Even in a town centered on research, there are still "those kind" of stores, is what I honestly thought. I don't have plans on going at all, but the merchant guild onee-san, seeing that we two were men, without changing her smile, not only did she guide us to the place but also told us the incredible services they provided. That lady, she is a professional.

"With how wide the town is, the competition is fierce as well. A place where there are mostly young ones and the quality of customers is special. The changes in fashion are also fast" (Shiki)

"It is scary how possible it is for something that was popular a few months ago to suddenly be seen as cuckoo now" (Makoto)

Scary. If I want to do a restaurant, the best option is to make a staple menu and obtain regular customers. But that I am thinking this way, may be because I am lacking an adventurous spirit. What I can compete with in this area, is with the Chinese food and simple Japanese-style food from my previous world. And if young people are the target, fast food is also an option. Well, it is a pointless thing to think about for a novice like me who can only do simple cooking.

Shiki must have noticed how hard it is to do business here as well. He makes a pondering face. I am happy that he is trying to contribute. Well, I want Shiki to be following me as I move in the Academy, so the time we will be together will increase.

I have to think about the person who will be minding the store. There is the choice of employing a hyuman, but I still don't know them that well. Instead of being looked down for strange reasons, it would be better to just bring someone from Asora. In that case, the potential candidates are the Forest Onis. That will depend on whether the training of Tomoe is going well though. If not, the runner-ups are the Arkes huh. I don't know if they can hide their strength and there is the problem that they aren't originally human-shaped, so the forest onis are the best choice though. If Akua and Eris looks after the store obediently, they would surely become the poster girls of the store. IF they act obediently. It won't work. The fact that I am having doubts makes them unqualified already. Also, they are young girls, so trouble with customers will… ouch ouch, *my stomach is hurting*. <Because of stress>

N? The Forest Onis theysent to Asora seem to be elites, but there were quite a lot who were young. I don't know how much of their personality has been corrected, but I feel like theymay become a seed for trouble. However, the Arkes don't have experience in interacting with people. No matter which I choose, I feel like it would cause me headaches.

In that case, I may have to think about the possibility of employing a hyuman. Ah, I wonder if in this world there is something like interviews, which lets me look at the abilities of the person in question. I don't know if interviews are too formal, so when I go to the guild next time, I will ask.

With what happened with those students a few days ago, I am uneasy about employing people without skills to communicate with customers. Well, thanks to that event, I was able to tell the forest onis can easily handle those kind of people with their strength.

"The place we bought is on a big avenue, so at least we won't be passed by without catching the eye of no one. Also, I think it is a good thing there are no similar businesses near" (Shiki)

"It is because of that, that we bought the place. I don't know how to advertise a store that doesn't stand out after all. That part, I will be settling it with money. Medicine as main. After, I will make it so people will be able to order armor as well, so I am counting on you Shiki" (Makoto)

"In what?" (Shiki)

“As the public representative. On the outside, you will be actingas the owner of the store. That’s why on the times like lectures, I want you to indirectly tell them medicine knowledge and the way to use magic medications in practice. That way, a part of our students will be able to tell the quality and effects of our products right?” (Makoto)

“… Publicity. You have already thought about it” (Shiki)

“Only to this extent. You and the Arkes seem to have made various medicines and it is true that their effects are high” (Makoto)

That’s right. Shiki has built more intimacy with the Arkes than with Mio. I don’t know if it could be called the fusion of alchemy and pharmaceutics. They have good compatibility and have made quite the amount of types of magic medications. Some of them even made ambrosia. I don’t intend to put that one out normally for sale though.

Ah, I should think about the line-up of medicines I will be putting out. The general ones like fever medicines and wound medications are a given. An antidote against the poison of mamonos and later I will bring out a drink medication I have thought of. It’s not like I was the one who thought of it, but it is something like an energy drink that is used to recover from fatigue. I thought it would be nice having those here so I made them reality. For the students that are doing their best and the people that work hard, I feel like this will be profitable (until there are copy products of it). *Aim for it, at the bags of the students and the loving white robe*. ＜目指せ学生鞄と白衣の恋人＞ ＜Not sure of the meaning＞

“I want to continue the talk of the store, so let’s go take our lunch. If we do well, we might be able to open it soon” (Makoto)

“Understood. Then for lunch…” (Shiki)

“N. Isn’t Gotetsu fine?” (Makoto)

“That place’s nabe is superb. I have no objections” (Shiki)

We coincidentally found the restaurant Gotetsu where the girl we saved worked in. We have used it a number of times for lunch and dinner. Thinking about the number of days we have been here, I am aware that the amount times we have gone there are quite a lot. The nabe that the shopkeeper says is a specialty of his hometown, tastes quite different from the one of my hometown, but it is still delicious. I liked it because I have memories of my homeland, but Shiki seems to have honestly liked the taste of it. Now, every time I ask Shiki where to eat, he would instantly respond Gotetsu. Tonight I want to check my new store, so this time I designated Gotetsu for our lunch. Even though he likes it, I hope he is not wishing to eat on the same place for lunch and dinner every day. It is something from a long time ago, but in my previous world there was a person who always responded *Ma kukama* ＜マ○クかマ○＞ when we asked him where would he want to eat. Well, the two are the same kind of store though. After a while, we stopped asking him where he would want to eat. His answer was always the same after all.

I feel like if not handled well, Shiki might turn the same way in this town. That’s why I have to be forward in looking for a new store.

The first time I went to that establishment and saw nabe, I seriously questioned about the existence of otherworldlers aside from me and the heroes. When I tasted it, my doubts vanished instantly though. There were various types, but there were a lot of peculiar ones. I then understood that it would be hard to not get tired of this town. Also, there was no taste of soy sauce.

And also, shopkeeper, there's no sweet nabe. For me, there is definitely none! When I saw that overflowing cream and ingredients, I honestly thought it was merengue and wanted to escape reality. That I saw Shiki as a being surpassing humanity for eating such a thing, is a secret. Really, thanks a lot for eating it all Shiki. This was the first time I gave up on the food in this world.

The girl working at Gotetsu said her name was Ruria. That she seemed a lot brighter than when we first met must be because she was serving the customers. Looking at that girl who had such cold eyes, changing her attitude and acting so bright while working made me think she is quite level-headed. I haven't done part-time jobs, so it may be because I haven't seen people act inside and outside of work. The people doing work probably have to be this tough or they can't live by. This world clearly discriminates more than my previous one, so one may have to be even tougher.

We went a number of times, but it doesn't seem she thinks we are aiming for her and she doesn't seem to be acting wary of us. And in reality, every time we come, we wholeheartedly eat nabe, especially Shiki. At the first times, for some reason she looked at me with a face filled with cautiousness. Maybe because my outward

appearance looks suspicious. I do have my mask off, but don't tell me it's exactly because I don't have it on? No, I am probably overthinking.

But she talks, there are no weird parts of her and she is hyuman. Why was she involved with those students? Did she have bad luck, just plain chance? I tried asking and she didn't talk so maybe it wasn't coincidence. Then she has some special circumstances? I don't know.

The two of us visit often and we ask for two menus, so Shiki and I seem to stand out quite a bit in the store. Ruria also remembers our names already. Now when we come, she does some light conversation.

Today too, while Shiki ate his nabe, we talked about us going to the Academy and about finally being able to begin working. She is the first acquaintance in this town to know our names. The place where we are going to open our store is a bit far from here, so when we open, we probably won't be able to come as often and a part of me is sad about that. Well, if I talk to Shiki about it, the chances of him wanting to come here are high, so we might unexpectedly visit often. In my case, since we are in a center place where we can find varied stores, I want to try out different kinds of food. We might find something resembling konbu and katsuobushi faster than Tomoe. If that happens, it might work as a nice souvenir.

Someday I want Shiki to try the nabe I know of. Mizutaki, shabushabu, sukiyaki, yudofu. Yeah, I also want to eat those.

Ah, that's right. If possible, I want to do something about the interior design of the store this evening. The design

will be done by Shiki to a certain extent and it will also be based on the stores around. In this world, as long as you use magic, there is no definite need to call for a craftsman in order to work on the interior. Shiki can use the earth element and he has just the right kind of magic to use in this type of scenario. When we can economize, it feels plain good.

Not only that, it also becomes good practice for my magic. Lately, I have been living in a constant state of concentration where I can activate my magic at once. Even so, I can't maintain it for too long and I have tried training in making a strong defensive barrier even if imperfect. I learned not too long ago that in places with special environments like a battlefield where one holds a characteristic state of mind, it is hard to move your magic like your own hands and feet.

Now that the bug has found me once, it is true that I don't know what might happen and when. I have to pass each day as precious and not waste any of time of it. My life is at stake after all.

Finishing lunch, by the time Shiki and I arrived at the Academy, the students were at lunch break probably thanks to us eating lunch early. Quite a lot of people were coming out from respective buildings. The giant white construction looked somewhat modern-like and also felt a bit nostalgic. It may also be because the nature of it being a school feels nostalgic as well.

Seeing as we are not from here, they look at us with curious eyes (I want to believe it is not because of my appearance). While avoiding them, we head for the designated place.

… That there were people taken aback and some that looked back twice, m-must be because this is an unusual happening.

Chapter 84: Encounter With The “Library”

[Looking forward to work with you]

“Looking forward to work with you”

Shiki and I finish our greetings once again and clapping sounds.

This place seems to be the Academy’s office where briefings are done. It’s wide and seeing the desks lined up, for a second I thought it was a room for staff members. I didn’t feel the characteristic tension. They explained me the lecture’s contents and the rules in detail and after that, they asked about what plans we have.

Two people were receiving us.

One of them seems to be the same as me, a teacher. Though, I can’t say we are the same huh. He is a full-time teacher and I am a part-time one. I don’t commute to this academy every day and am not lodging in the dormitories. It seems he is teaching fighting techniques like me, but he doesn’t look that strong. Fighting techniques are pointless if you just speak the theory of it, so he must be relatively strong. They told me the contents of the current lectures and the level of the students. I thought they were playing house. But I only thought of it. I obviously restraint myself from saying so. I can’t say that it is troubling to deal with elite(lol).

The other one is an important person in the work place. This one didn’t show a single bit of haughtiness like the

male teacher and felt like a lenientperson. The staff in the high school I was in, acted frankly around me so I was bewildered at first, but the ones in front of me are polite and on point. Maybe it's the difference in behavior between being a student and being a teacher. However, they didn't make questions regarding salary, my store and didn't look at the documents; they just smoothly replied and that made me feel they had high ability. Finishing the explanations, they wished regards and we answered in equal fit.

"Then, with this I will be going. At first, I will be sending the students from my class in rotation, but later please try gathering students with your own skill, Raidou-sensei. From what I heard, you are a person with high abilities. I am looking forward to it"

"Brait-sensei, thank very much"

It seems the teacher will be leaving now. Shiki and I lower our heads once more and see him off. From what he said, the first times I will be doing my tactics specialized lesson, I will have a certain percent of students from Brait-sensei's class. He is an attentive person and he introduces students to new teachers in the same area. A reliable person or so they say. It seems the staff are also being helped a lot by him, I can tell that they have a favorable opinion of him in the staff room. I personally think he feels like an unsavory person. People that are too nice don't bring me good vibes.

From what I heard of the staff-san, a part-time teacher that secures enough students for a class is rare. When comparing a full-time teacher's lecture, a part-time teacher's regular number is half of that. 30 people. Is it

possible to not gather 30 people in this giant academy? By the way, the theory classes are different from practical skill ones in that as long as the students can enter, it can accept as many as they want. It seems to be because there is a limit to how many students a practical skill teacher is able to take care of. If one isn't careful when using magic or swords, one can die, so it is expected.

The lecture's payment depends completely on ratio. In the case of a part-time, the selection of students is quite free. If you want to earn, you will have to try your best to increase your number of students. For one lecture, a part-time teacher gets 10 silver for each student. If a part-time teacher gets 30 people, one time will be 3 gold. It is practically the annual income of a person working in a normal store or a staff in a guild. If you work for numerous times in a week for 1 month, it would turn into an incredible amount of gold. Thinking about the value on my previous world, the payment is quite excessive for a teacher. If a part-timer gets this much, then just how much would a full-time one get?

"And so, Raidou-sensei. About the lecture, is it okay for you to begin next week? There will be around 10 students from Brait-sensei's class, so we have no issues on our side"

[Next week huh. I don't mind, but I want to do lectures with the students I choose, so I might bring troubles to Brait-sensei. Also, I am planning on doing lectures for a big amount of people. There's no problem in that right?]

A while ago I confirmed this and since I was worried about it, I confirm it once more. I am intending to do a class with 10 people, or around the number of people one

can line up in a column. Also, I will have Shiki accompany and teach once a week. I only have experience teaching the kids in the neighborhood, I haven't taught anyone while receiving anything as compensation. At first I will have Shiki do a follow-up and get used to it.

"Yeah, of course. But that is quite unusual. Part-time workers normally frantically gather as many as they can without caring who it is. As expected, a person that is administering a store at the same time really has a different way of thinking"

[Since I am in charge, I want to pay attention to it after all. About the business, as long as I don't do any activities related to it in Academy grounds, there is no problem right? I am grateful for your hasty replies]

That means there is no problem for Shiki and me to use medicines for free or to show them, and to widen the knowledge of them. Great.

"… Teacher is a lenient person. Also diligent. It's a bit unexpected. I have heard that you are quite the strong person after all. I was wondering how you would present yourself. To tell you the truth, I hold you in respect. This place gathers the best students around the towns after all. Please train them to your best"

[Okay. Then with this, I will be leaving]

"Ah that's right. There is a library you can use when you want to search for data, a place inside the Academy one can use to train practical skills, and a reception where one needs to do petitions beforehand to use the field. I

will be telling them of your arrival to these places”

Shiki and I along with him, talk about the places as we confirm their location. We certainly need to know both of them. And while at it, I should finish the field application today. The document’s process is relatively complex so I feel like the things I will be asking of Shiki might increase.

In that case, I have to think about the store a bit. As expected, the Forest Onis huh. Arkes are scarce so, yeah, there is also the option of asking Tomoe’s opinion.

Also, the library. I thought it would be a room, but for it to have a building just for it, is quite unexpected. It’s like a university.

Having such a big library, I can really expect a lot from it. It wouldn’t be a bad idea to look at books related to magic. I am sorry for the book loving Shiki, but I will leave the application to him and head to the library.

[Shiki, I will be checking out the library. Head to the reception and after finishing the request, I want you to head there as well]

I order him as we leave to the corridors. Shiki nods. I think he is the number one person who wouldn’t run rampant, so that’s why instead of those other two, I nominated Shiki. I am truly happy. The number one reason is that we are of the same sex though.

Because we are right at the opposite direction of the staff office, Shiki and I turn our back to each other and walk to our objectives.

At any rate, the air that is flowing here is peace itself. When I am here, my sensation of being in another world or in my original world gets fuzzy. Because the subject I am teaching is otherworldly in itself, the strange sensation is even stronger.

In the halls there are students engaging in friendly chat and the bulletin boards have pleasant posters with contents about contact information within the school. The atmosphere resembles that of my sister's university which I visited in summer. There are a lot more people here though. It may also be because of the season I visited.

"This is literally what a school is" (Makoto)

Before leaving Tsige, there was a time when I thought about my homeland. While on my journey, I was thrown into the battlefield, so it slowly grew fainter though. This place reminds me so much of modern times. Really.

"The choice of lectures is lenient and it feels like I have come to a university with freedom. Oh, this place is the library huh. Incredible. How big" (Makoto)

I do a monologue no one would understand as I arrive at the library. Ah, did they think I am a crazy person? Well, who cares.

Anyways, this place is big. It's a lot bigger than the municipal library in the town I lived in. This is surprising. In this world there is a library this big huh. This truly shows me that I have lived in a rural area. And the heroes began from a big country's castle huh. Fuh, how unbearable.

I enter inside.

In the shelves that are taller than a person, one could see books, books, books tightly packed without leaving any gaps. The scene of shelves fully loaded with books lined up left and right, could be called a forest that grows books. At least for me, this is my first time seeing so many books gathered in one place. Incredible. Just, incredible.

That characteristic and pleasant scent. Different from Tsige where one could see snow in places, at Academy Town the days become increasingly hotter. I can tell that I have come to a faraway place.

The library scent I have not smelled in a long time hasn't changed at all. Also, it is a pleasant air. In this world it seems they don't know that libraries go well with air conditioning. In this sense, one can feel the difference between science and magic.

There should be quite a lot of persons here, but the reason why it feels so sparse must be because this place is big enough to make me feel that way. Because the number of books is bigger than the amount of people.

"Do you need something?"

I, who was deeply moved, was called out by someone. A calm and mellow voice. A voice that one would be able to feel seductiveness, but the girl itself took away the nature of sensuality in her voice.

When I turn my head to the direction of the voice, there was, as expected, the figure of a woman. She isn't a

student. A librarian, maybe?

[Sorry. This is my first time seeing a library of this degree and unintentionally spaced out. This is a splendid library]

“I see. I am happy to hear your praises. You were standing in the hall but, what business brings you here? If you are looking for a book in specific, I can be of help”

I was talking with writing, and yet she didn’t get fluster for one second and quickly answered. Eh, she wasn’t surprised?

[I don’t have a book in specific, but well, about magic. If there are books about aria language, I want to read them]

I respond to her with the subject I thought of a moment ago.

“Ara, for that Raidou-sama who possesses incredible magic and combat abilities, to look for such simple content. Is your companion Shiki ＜識様＞ the one reading it?” ＜Shiki’s name is written differently here＞

!!

As if her words blew me away, I take my distance from her. This woman…

Luckily, because there is a hall just after the entrance, I still had space. I am thankful I was able to open space. It’s not like everyone can do weird teleportation like Sofia after all. I don’t plan to change my tactics of first taking my distance.

I have already completed an invisible barrier. The moment I took a step back, I had already finished its preparation. It's thanks to the daily tension. After, I will have to learn how to naturally do this.

"Incredible! In that instant you spread out a barrier. It's like a sleight of hand. To be so skillful even without using aria. It's just like the stories tell"

[Who are you? Why do you know my name?]

While showing her the writing, I check out the woman.

Her age is, young. It's just an estimation, but it looks like she is in the first half of her twenties. Her height is close to mine. She doesn't have any weapons. Doesn't have strong magic power equipment and I can only feel the presence of a normal person from her. Because of her baggy robe, I don't know how toned her body is, but she isn't showing any signs of exerting them. There is no magic aria either.

I can't tell her build because of her clothes, but there is no doubt she is a woman. Her face, is cute. In this world, this is an easy 100 points. Different from the indigo blue hair from Tomoe, her hair is a light blue. No doubt she is a person I don't know. She is probably a hyuman though.

"Just like stories tell" is what she said. She knows about me and Shiki. Also, is there a person here who knows about me having incredible magic and combat abilities? The only person I can think of is the one in charge of the test. But is it information that a librarian should know? I don't want to think that the information regarding the persons taking the test to be leaked so easily.

“Don’t be so on guard please. You are a teacher from this school. I at least should know the name”

Lies. I confirmed in the staff room. Taking into account the part-timers and full-time ones, there is easily a hundred or so. To have the ability to remember all of them is too strange. Moreover, today is the first time I have been here.

I won’t lower my guard. Taking into account the interference of my whole body, I pay careful attention to the changes in magic power flow while checking that woman’s movements.

[As long as you don’t prove to me that you have unnatural memorization ability, I can’t believe you]

“… I was just intending to tease you though. It seems you are the distrustful type huh. Your and your companion’s name as well as thatinformation, I just heard it from other people”

Maybe she was shocked by my cautiousness, she shrugs her shoulders. The one in charge said it? But I don’t like that simple teasing of hers.

“How troublesome. Then let me tell you the name of the person that I heard this information from. You know Ruria from Gotetsu right?”

I heard a name I didn’t expect.

Ruria from Gotetsu. I certainly know. If it’s her, it would be normal to know my and Shiki’s name.

“About your skills, I heard from the one in charge of the

test. I don't know if Raidou-sama knows his name, but he is called Erus. There was a talk of someone gathering three types of balls while we were eating so…"

The woman makes a gesture of holding a cup with her hands and bringing it to her mouth. Is she talking about a meal with alcohol?

Three types of balls. So that's why she said vague things like incredible magic and combat ability huh. However, I don't see the connection between her and Ruria.

Is she a regular in Gotetsu? But is Ruria someone that would easily talk about other customers? Her mouth is tight and she doesn't talk that much with other customers. I have gone a number of times, but I haven't seen this woman there.

[I know about Ruria. I have been going to Gotetsu lately after all. But I don't know what reason she would have to talk to you about us]

"Fuh~, Ruria is my sister. She told me about a strange customer and it was about Raidou-sama and Shiki. That Shiki is a nabe lover who could eat cream nabe for his three meals. I was a bit shocked when I heard it"

Cream nabe. Ah, that was really nightmare in a bowl. I wonder how Shiki is able to eat two of those.

Tto. Fumu. If she even knows about the cream nabe, there is no doubt. But sister huh. Now that she mentions it, the color of her hair is the same.

I look at Onee-san once again.

“What is it?”

Maybe she found it suspicious, the Onee-san calls me.

How pitiful. I don’t know the age difference between her sister, but she is totally losing in body development. There won’t be a turning point in the future, so live strong.

“… You seem to have a discomforting expression but, did this clear your suspicions?”

With her eyelids twitching a bit, she fixes her glasses and asks once again. I understand that gesture. When you have glasses, you unconsciously play with it.

[Yeah, the misunderstanding was cleared. I see, so you were her sister. But to suddenly be called by my first name, moreover, by a complete stranger, no matter who it is, they would be surprised]

“It wasn’t to the level where one would get surprised though. But I am sorry for my rudeness. My name is Eva, nice to meet you” (Eva)

[Eva-san, I see. My name is Raidou. You may already know but, I am a part-time teacher. And you, are you a librarian?]

“Yeah. If you have a book you are looking for, please ask without restrain. I am almost always over there” (Eva)

Saying that, Eva-san points out the right hall’s counter. A number of staff members are there. I can tell that they are glancing at my conversation with Eva. We were probably a bit noisy.

[I will be counting on you. Then with this, I will be leaving]

“Is it okay to not look at any books? If I remember correctly, you were looking for a book regarding arias right?” (Eva)

[I will leave that for another time. Then]

“Too bad. I will be waiting” (Eva)

Eva-san smiles and sees me off as I leave the library.

Hah, I was nervous. I didn’t feel like reading a book and just leave outside. I was way too abrupt.

Geez…

(So that was Raidou huh. He is certainly an outrageous user. Maybe he can use it?)

“Eh?”

The moment I finished moving down the stairs in front of the entrance, I suddenly hear a voice and check my surroundings. There’s no one. Even though it was a voice that felt pretty close.

That voice was… the voice of the woman I was talking with not long ago. The voice of Eva-san. No doubt about it.

But even when I turned around, I couldn’t see her figure anywhere. She saw me off and didn’t leave outside so it should be a given. Then what was that just now?

Did Tomoe’s power go crazy again?

But my emotions are not going haywire like that time, so why?

Also, the atmosphere of her voice was quite different. It was a voice that made me feel a penetrating cold.

“Raidou-sama, sorry for the wait”

Shiki’s voice.

When I look, he is using the same route I took to arrive where I am. I see, he already finished the application. It’s Shiki, so he probably hurried. He is even trotting to where I am.

“Shiki, I didn’t wait. Thanks. Then, let’s show our faces in the merchant guild and check out the store” (Makoto)

“Understood” (Shiki)

It is still early to call it evening. While being grateful about being able to use more time on the store than I thought, I leave the campus.

Chapter 85: First Class

“Did you hear? Seems the new practical skill teacher can’t speak”

“What with that? Then how is he going to do his lectures? Don’t tell me he will be teaching his students through their body”

“It seems he uses written communication. I don’t care as long as I get stronger. That’s why I don’t like incompetent ones”

“It’s Brait-sensei’s instructions, so I will at least attend once but… it seems he is a demi-human you know?”

“Demi-human?! Why did the academy accept such a thing as a teacher?”

“… Who cares if he is a demi-human. We see elves quite a lot, so it isn’t good to have prejudice”

“Rotsgard specialty. I hope it doesn’t become an empty class”

“If it isn’t good, it will soon become that way. There are a hell lot of choice classes after all”

“Yeah. I at least hope he is a cool person”

“Ahahaha…”

…

Seriously?

How to say this… are they serious?

These are the students I will be teaching for my first class.

Pressured by my uneasiness, I use Sakai to feel the presence of the people heading here and instinctively strain my ears, which I regret doing now.

Their impression of me is bad even before we meet?!

Shiki and I finally arrived at the field and were waiting while sitting on a bench there.

This is obvious but, what I am going to do is a practical skill class, so there won't be that many times where I will be indoors. If we are doing muscle training, indoors is also a choice, but… it will become a plain class, so it will be okay to do so when the students decide to follow me.

The people in the staff room gave me a few textbooks and a number of booklets related to teachers for reference. When I finished reading it today, I understood a little about what's special about this academy and about magic.

Being able to finally touch on the topic I have come to Academy Town for, today, I finally feel like I have moved a step forward.

First, it's about what makes the Academy special.

In this Rotsgard Academy, there are obligatory classes one has to attend, and the rest it is free for one to decide if one wants to take it. It's a system that lets a certain amount of freedom.

Leaving aside the fixed classes and the subjects that are necessary for your related technical skill, the position of the people teaching the optional classes is weak. It would be one thing if you were not able to change them for half a year or all year around once you choose it, but since one can change it anytime they want, the position of the students is a lot higher.

Avoiding the hours of popular classes and holding a course in a different lot of time, making tests easier and I heard there are even teachers who buy students in order to get attendance. That there aren't many teachersthinking of improving the contents of their own class to get students, makes me feels like it is already too late.

In short, one's position can be that of a part-time teacher, but the possibility of being looked down by your students is abnormally high. On top of that, I just learned that I already have a bad impression.

Magic. I have to put this in my mind, but the common knowledge I have earned until now, I feel like it is better to not put it out.

The arias are memorized and magic is something that one has to activate by chanting the aria in a sonorous voice, is what seems to be the standard.

To do an aria without letting your voice out is called voiceless aria and it seems it will reduce the original power of the magic.

… From the very start I have been doing things that deviate from the standard, and I just learned this after

coming here.

Well, if I want to have originality in my class, I thought that it would be fine to just teach the students things around this particular area. Saying random things like “In real combat…”

“Raidou-sama, looks like they will be coming soon” (Shiki)

“Yeah, I know. Shiki, it is okay for the class objective to be as we discussed right?” (Makoto)

“I think there won’t be any problems. Show your true strength and teach combat aria to the students that remain. There may be low amounts of students who use physical combat that remain, but in that case, I will be teaching them anti-magician battle techniques. It’s a course the other teachers don’t have, so I think we should be able to choose students” (Shiki)

“Teaching knowledge and power to strange individuals will not bring anything good, so it will be more comforting to teach a chosen minority of elites” (Makoto)

“Yes. However, for Raidou-sama to be the one getting angry and me being the kind one, aren’t the roles reversed? In the first place, I don’t think there is a need to divide the roles” (Shiki)

“… Well, it seems that in optional classes 2 persons is unusual, so there is a part of me that wants to try if this will really work out. I feel like me playing the bad guy will have better results. If it turns into something weird, I will stop, so accompany me for a bit in this” (Makoto)

“Okay…” (Shiki)

Shiki seems like he is still not convinced. But this is something I have wanted to try once if I had the chance. Like the ones in detective dramas. A combi of one being the angry and the other the soothing one, they manipulate the impression of the person.

In this case I will be the scary one and since us two will be doing the lectures, I think people will gather if one of us holds a favorable impression.

… If I am already not being treated as a human being, then let’s just have them hate me… is not how I deal with my despair okay?

I am not thinking about being an ass and then be a bit gentle to see if I can increase affection points, okay?

I feel the gazes of a number of people.

Fuh~ so they have come.

“Uhm~, is this Raidou-sensei’s practical skill class?”

The female student who called me demi-human not too long ago, knits her eyebrows but still uses formal language to talk to us.

I nod lightly, not at the girl, but at Shiki. Now then, let’s try doing the scary teacher.

“Yeah, that’s right. Everyone here are students that came because of Brait-sensei’s referral right? I am this lecture’s assistant, my name is Shiki. And this person here is…” (Shiki)

[Shiki's master and was a merchant at the border of the world, Raidou. Because of circumstances I can't speak, but in this way I am able to communicate. This will be a harsh class that will be centered on magic, but I hope you guys follow me]

My personal history is a lie and I tried making my attitude like that of a slightly strict instructor. When my appearance is a minus, instead of smiling friendlily, I feel like it is better to be someone who is kind every now and then to create a gap.

I actually wanted to go with a shouting type, but since that would be hard with written communication, I decided to go with being strict.

"We are planning on opening a slightly unusual store, so if you have the chance, please check it out" (Shiki)

Shiki advertises.

If we don't say the store's name, they shouldn't nag much about it. And I had Shiki smile gently from beginning to end. Try your best in being the kind and gentle Shiki-sensei. I will also try my best in being the scary Raidou-sensei.

[Since it's the first class, let's begin with a self-introduction]

I have the 10 people that came to my class introduce themselves.

Name, age, what year they are currently in, and after that, their objective and the element they are the strongest in.

It ended safely, but a question still remained. About the element.

[You, you said you were best at water right? How well can you use other elements?]

“The others? Uhm… A bit of earth and fire”

[Can you have a spirit lend you its power?]

“No way! There’s no way I can do that!”

Doesn’t that mean you practically can only use water? Moreover, this one doesn’t have that much magic power and the balance is bad.

Wait. Could it be…?

[You, you said you were best at fire right? Others?]

I ask another one, the student that said she doesn’t care if I was a demi-human as long as my face was good. Maybe she felt discomfort that I asked her, she frowns.

“… I can use a bit of wind as well. I can’t use spirit magic”

After that, I asked the others, but it seems that the highest is three.

(Shiki, what is this? Are hyumans limited in the elements they can use?) (Makoto)

(No. It’s just that they are so accustomed to use the element they are fit in that they neglect the training of their other elements. They consider the ability to use other elements as a type of talent) (Shiki)

(So everyone can do it right?) (Makoto)

(Of course. It's just that they will use more magic power than when using the element they are most fit in) (Shiki)

(I see. Understood) (Makoto)

No matter if it is their specialty, it is not like they are beginners who just began to learn, so I think it is a bit weird to only get better at their forte element. It is actually convenient to be able to use the others after all.

Even that superior dragon kid was surprised by it. So yeah, it would be interesting to train and see how it goes.

[I have understood the abilities of everyone. Sadly, I can only call you guys unskilled]

"Unskilled?! Us?!"

It's the one who said I can't use my mouth. He has vigor, or more like his appearance does too but, you, aren't you a warrior?

[That's right. I want to be appointed by the country, I want to spread my name as an adventurer, I want to stay in this academy as a researcher. I have heard the objectives of everyone here. In the present condition it is possible to make this true, but you will always stay as second-rate]

"… Aren't you going a bit far with your words? Even though you are just a mere part-time teacher"

It's the girl that said "don't be a teacher if you are a demi-human". She is angry. Today we will show off our

strength and have the gentle Shiki-sensei leave an impression. This part is important, so I am sorry about provoking you.

[That's the truth. Well yeah, then, let me ask you something. You said you were a magician right? Then, what is it that a magician should fear the most in a battle?]

"… Being isolated, to get the enemy close to you, to panic, to have one's magic power dry up"

An answer right out from the book. Well, I think that's not wrong though.

[Splendid. Then, what's the proper form we try to achieve in a battle?]

"To adapt ourselves. No matter if we are isolated, approached, in an unexpected situation or run out of magic power; we have to be magicians that can choose the best choices in the right moment. That is the ideal form that we have to aim for"

[That's exactly right. Excellent. Then, if the girl beside you that said her forte is water, encounters an opponent who is weak against only wind magic so she can't effectively damage it, what would you do to "adapt"?]

"In that case I will prepare a wind element attack at the vanguard or a different attack…"

[There's only her there]

"… Then, before it reaches, prepare a wind element attack method. There's no other choice but to use magic

items to prepare”

[Yeah. If you are unable to do anything about it, it’s the right choice to depend on tools. For that sake, it is a good idea to save a tool of another element, but there’s nothing wrong with being able to use it yourself. 3 at most, is not right. You should at least be able to freely control 3 elements or in real combat there’s no doubt you will feel like something is lacking]

“… In the academy and in the country, it is common sense to first learn the one element you are most fit in”

So this time it’s the male student who said this would become an empty class huh. It’s not just “first”, the problem is that you are only doing that. You guys are considered elite after all. I understand their faces of displeasure. It isn’t fun to have someone deny the way they have been doing things after all.

[You guys are elite right? Is it okay for you guys to be like the other ones? Having your element seen through, be countered and ripped through like paper?]

“T-That is, we should believe in the swordsman and knights at the front…”

[Believe huh. That’s a nice word, but it’s not good to use that word as an escape route and not do anything. To create counter-plans from a high point of view, isn’t that how an elite should really be? Of course, even if it is a way to protect your body, to give up on it just because it is not your forte element that’s just no good. It would be one thing if it were impossible, but if it is a possible, you should try and reach out]

“Guh”

“Then, does that mean Raidou-sensei is able to maintain a high point-of-view and succeed when being isolated and approached by an enemy?”

This one is… Oh yeah, the boy that said he didn’t want an incompetent teacher. Did he get interested a little bit?

[In my case, for the sake of surviving, the point-of-view method is a bit different. Let’s see, then let’s today let’s show a mock battle between me and Shiki. Because it’s better to know the skills of the people that you will be learning from]

When I look at Shiki, he nods and takes out a staff that is wrapped in lustrous cloth. The staff that was humbly made by the Eldwas was showing its bare presence. The beautiful cloth that resembled silk, I don’t know how it was made, but it seems it has the ability to hide the status of an equipment.

“Me and my master, Raidou-sama, will be showing a bit of our abilities, so please do attend. It would be good if you are able to get used to one of the forms you should be aiming for” (Shiki)

I don’t know if Shiki’s words were reaching them or not. The students’ gazes were gathering at his staff. Their looks were filled with shock.

“Oi, that staff…”

“What is… that?”

“What crazy magic power. Also, the elements are

jumbled together”

“Incredible. Not even in the academy’s displayed items have I seen something like this”

As expected, that staff is quite the creation. My clothes should be even more, but it doesn’t have the nature of leaking its power outside, so its looks are that of normal clothes.

We begin to move to a place a bit away from them.

Shiki had his hair tied up at his back and wearing a serious expression. Even if it was an order, he is a diligent one so he won’t cut corners.

[If it’s at this distance, it is enough to call it “having an enemy approach” right?]

In the midst of the glances that gathered on Shiki’s staff, I confirm with the boy who was the trigger of this mock battle. He nods with a meek face.

[Shiki, let’s begin]

“Then Raidou-sama, here I go!” (Shiki)

The mock battle to show our abilities and make the future easier to handle, had begun.

Chapter 86: Looks Like He Will Be My First Student

– Aspiring swordsman student POV –

The fight between a new teacher who is in a range where aria wouldn't be able to catch up and the man who seems to be working as his assistant, began.

The reason I came to this guy's class was because Brait-sensei told me so I had no choice. I didn't have any intentions to come here again. In the first place, I am a swordsman that uses magic as support and since the time I heard that Raidou's lecture would be mostly about spells and arias, the direction it took was not fit to mine.

This is like a harassment from Brait-sensei. That sensei, whenever a practical skill teacher comes, he always sends a number of students that are from another expertize and pulls them away at once. That way he will use sweet words to draw in the teachers that are troubled getting students as protégé.

The temporary teachers that gather students in the first week without much effort normally get conceited after all. Later, they usually fail in gathering students. I think it is a low move, but it does show high effectiveness.

Brait-sensei is theoretical and teaches tactics as his main point, but he wants to have a higher position within the practical skill teachers so I think he is doing a lot of things. I don't think that with only writing things down and discussions it can become true ability, so I can't bring myself to like that sensei. I don't think strategy and

planning is a complete waste of time though.

Of course, there aren't many decent practical skill teachers, so in the lectures that I have decided, there are some I want to take out or change. This is a place where rich and nobles gather, but it doesn't mean skill will gather as well.

Scholarship students like me who have been recognized by the academy and possess special characteristics and aptitudes, don't mind about being injured in classes as long as it increases my skills to the very limit. In this academy, those classes can be enumerated and because of popularity issues, they normally get closed down. I feel irritated by that.

That's why, a person who can't use his mouth and can't even tell apart if he is a demi-human by his childish face, there's no sense of expectation at all. Moreover, if there were such a genius of the same generation, the country would have already taken possession of him already. Well, he did pass the employment exam, so he must at least have the minimum requirements.

The man holding a staff, he said his name was Shiki-san. The moment he said he would go, he immediately made a dash onto Raidou and closed the distance in an instant.

Fast. He is probably faster than me at stepping in. I thought he was a magician as well but, could it be I was wrong?

Seeing his delicate features, he didn't give me an image of close-range combat though.

“Wa!”

I involuntarily leak out my voice. I can hear something from everyone’s mouths, so it isn’t just me that’s surprised.

At the tip of Shiki-san’s staff, a golden knife appeared. It looked like a spear. There was no aria.

Is that an ability of that staff? I can tell that it is an amazing article from the magic power it releases. Also that it is a rare item I wouldn’t be able to even imagine its price.

There was no shred of hesitation. That edge was aiming directly at the chest of Raidou. He said himself that he was his master. What are his intentions?

The spear was heartlessly lunged. Fast. From the front, that is not a speed a magician would be able to follow with one’s eye.

This is over. I was sure of it. Shiki-san wins.

But my prediction was easily overturned.

Because the spear stopped less than 10 cm before reaching Raidou by a hexagonal barrier.

“….”

Again, I couldn’t feel an aria. What in the world is this?

It feels cold, like being poured with ice water.

Raidou is empty-handed. Not only does he not have a staff, he is not holding anything.

With no catalyst, he was able to create a barrier without aria in this short amount of time? Even for a joke, this is too far.

Without minding about being blocked, Shiki-san once again takes an offensive with his staff like a spear. The speed of the spear increases and his technique increases. Even my eyes can't catch up.

And yet, Raidou was able to completely block that barrage with a single small barrier that he moved around.

Thus…

Raidou who caught Shiki-san's spear with the edge of his barrier, used the barrier to slide the edge and ward it off. Before I noticed, the form of the barrier had changed from flat to a round shape.

The moment it was warded off, Raidou made an attack to the staff's side and crumbles the posture of Shiki-san. The right hand of him that was shining red was stretched out.

The palm that had gouged into Shiki-san's body shone magic power light and exploded. Shiki-san's body is blown several meters away and a cloud of dust rose… What an exchange of offensive and defensive.

Raidou has practically not moved from his initial position.

Incredible. Is this… really a fight between two magicians?

I can hear the sound of gulping breath. I was being

fascinated by the battle unfolding in front of me.

Before the cloud of dust dispersed, I could only confirm their figures by their shadows, but when Shiki-san got up as soon as he dropped, he hit the ground with the staff's jewel.

In an instant, Raidou jumps back.

In the place where he was, at its circumference, numerous spears that would skewer its target projected out from the ground! Shiki-san is an earth element magician!

Raidou-sensei was able to predict this move. If it were me, there's no doubt the battle would end with that surprise attack. I unconsciously bite my lips.

The cloud of dust was forcefully dispersed by that magic attack.

A red flash.

Is it fire arrow? Raidou-sensei, while jumping to the back, he was forming the spell and shot it. When I look carefully, I could see a part of Shiki-san's earth spear was smashed.

However, I don't know if it hit Shiki-san or he evaded it. There was no explosion nor impact. It just passed through my field of vision and disappeared just like that.

The figure of Shiki-san that was now in the open, was laughing.

His clothes didn't have a single wound. I thought it was a

magic with quite the power, but was he able to defend against that? It was to the point that a number of female students let out screams.

Looking again, this time, on Raidou-sensei's feet, earth began to swell up. A black shining ore was created. The tip is sharp and had the shape of a nut.

That was shot at Shiki-san. The speed was as fast as an arrow.

Shiki-san uses the tip of the staff that doesn't have the edge anymore to stop that black attack. When he does this, the black cluster that had become a dangerous weapon returns to being just earth and falls to the ground.

When sensei saw this, he creates two arrows at the same time one blue, one red and shoots them at Shiki-san.

Shiki-san takes them on with the tip of the staff again. The two lights are being swallowed. That staff… is absorbing magic power?!

"N-No way… Water, earth, fire. There is no way a person can use three elements at that high level of power"

"Parallel aria. This is the first time I have seen it"

That's right. That staff is incredible, but Raidou-sensei is also. He is without a doubt using three elements at a battle-able level.

Also, to form two spells at the same time, parallel aria.

[Even though I shot two arrows of different elements at

practically the same time, it was splendidly blocked]

“I have been training as well” (Shiki)

Since the battle began, this is the first time they have conversed.

[But we have taken a lot of time]

“You are right. Let’s end it with the next one” (Shiki)

After some frivolous talk, the two of them nod.

I was already completely fascinated by this fight. Since coming to this academy, I was sure this fight was levels above the ones I have seen until now.

From the mouth of both of them, arias were chanted for the first time. Both of them were languages I have never heard before.

Ancient language. This was clearly a different system of aria from the one we use.

Shiki-san points the staff’s tip at Raidou-sensei. Several magical formations overlapped and rotated in place at the tip and spheres of intricate design were being formed.

Raidou-sensei, seeing Shiki-san, he moves half of his body; his left hand to the front and his right hand to the back. As if he were holding a bow. At the end of that right hand, a black darkness was forming spherically.

The moment both sides released their spell.

Shiki-san’s white and Raidou-sensei’s black that were released…

Both of them collided and the light that surged took away my field of vision completely. I was now unable to follow the direction this battle would take.

Inside that light, I heard the short scream of someone.

And then, the light in the surroundings began to fade.

After recovering my eyesight, what I saw was Shiki who had lost his posture and leaning on his knees and Raidou-sensei grabbing his neck.

“I have lost” (Shiki)

I heard the voice of Shiki-san affirming this scene.

I unconsciously let a sigh escape and a sense of exhaustion pervades my whole body. It seems it wasn’t only me. Looks like the strength of everyone had left their body.

Raidou-sensei releases Shiki-san’s neck and looks at us.

If it were before the mock battle, I would have been able to return that gaze, but the me right now felt awfully scared by it. The gaze that overlapped for a second, was averted by me.

[I will leave the decision of if you want to come next time. If you want to become strong no matter what, I will welcome you guys with open arms]

I was astonished that even the magic power of the writing was scaring me now. For such a person to exist…

The world is vast.

Raidou-sensei didn't turn back and leaves the field. But I have decided. There was no need to tell me. There's no doubt that the current me needs his teachings.

"In the end, it felt like we only made self-introductions, but with this, this time's lesson ends. I think you have now understood the effectiveness of being able to control multiple elements and to improve your arias… Oya? What's wrong?" (Shiki)

Shiki-san tells us about the end of the lesson on Raidou-sensei's stead. The tied up hair was already untied. Even though he was doing such an intense fight just now, Shiki-san smiled in a calm manner.

He is a magician, but this person possesses close-combat abilities that surpasses mine. Feelings of honest respect well up for Shiki-san. There's no doubt the two of them are incredible people though.

Lured by the words and gaze of Shiki-san, I look at a girl of the same year. She was holding her left elbow with her right hand. From below that right hand, red blood was drawing a line.

"No, it's nothing. Just a bit…"

"A splinter hit you in the mock battle just now huh" (Shiki)

Avoid something like that, is what I thought.

Ah, but… the scream that I heard at that last light. At that time it wouldn't be strange to not be able to evade the splinters. The field of vision was zero after all.

But to hide her wound in shame at Shiki-san's words must be because she thinks she is clumsy for not being able to evade it herself. She is also a person that is exempt from tuition, so her pride in her strength must be high.

"Uhm, it's really okay so… ah"

"That's something I will be deciding after looking at it. Even if I look like this, I have experience in healing after all" (Shiki)

Saying that, Shiki-san takes away her right hand and looks at the condition of her wound. Shiki-san naturally cleans the wound and the dirtied right hand with water. This person can also use water?

Also, experience in healing? It's so incredible I have no words.

"It seems to be a shallow cut. It won't turn into anything serious" (Shiki)

"Ah, yes. Thank you very much"

"At this level, there's no need to use magic. Let's see… Ah, here it is" (Shiki)

Shiki-san looks for something in his bag and shows it to her. A small bottle.

"It isn't to the level of deluxe, but it's a handmade medicine for wounds. If I smear the wound like this…" (Shiki)

"Hi~u!"

“Was it cold? Sorry, I forgot to tell you” (Shiki)

“Wa, yes. Ah, no, it’s okay”

He takes out an ointment type of medicine from the small bottle and spreads it through all the wound.

“Ah”

“Wow!”

“Incredible!!”

The wound visibly closes and returns to normal. Without using magic… Isn’t that quite the magic medication there?

N?

… Handmade?

Medicine manufacture… He is even in the alchemy area?!

Is he a superman?

“It isn’t something to be surprised about. It’s just a thing I slightly improved from basic wound medications” (Shiki)

Basic? This is?

If this is basic, then I might even believe his special ability can revive the dead.

“Now, with this you are fine. I am sorry for injuring you” (Shiki)

“N-No… Thank you very much. Uhm, about payment…”

“It’s enough with your thanks. This level of medication can be commonly found lined in our store. Well then, later” (Shiki)

This isn’t on a level that can be found even by mistake in pharmacies, Shiki-san.

But after Shiki-san brushed the earth that was on the clothes of the healed girl, he bowed and turned his back.

Brait-sensei, I… for the first time am grateful at you.

I truly thank you for introducing me to Raidou-sensei and Shiki-san.

Coming to this academy, I have finally met a person I want to call master.

Chapter 87: Wishing That It Will Go Well Through All Seasons

Even though I slept late, I woke up when the outside is still dim.

It's been 2 weeks since I began working as a teacher in the academy.

In that period, I went to Gotetsu 10 times. I personally feel like I don't want Nabe for a while… wait, that's not it. Let's leave aside my personal feelings.

Today is the day Kuzunoha will be opening its first store.

For the first store to be a branch office and not in Tsige feels weird, but I decide to just ignore that. In the midst of complicated circumstances, the time to finally open my store has come.

After consulting Tomoe, I had 2 Forest Onis send here. These guys are her personal selection so I believe in them, but the two people were the ones who attacked me, Akua and Eris.

The moment they got send here, I looked at their face and was thinking "change" but they were on the verge of crying and hugged me, so for now I decided not to do it.

I brought them to the outskirts once to test their skills, they have gotten pretty strong. It's a mystery why they tremble at the mention of Tomoe, Mio and, for some reason, Komoe-chan. They must have passed through tough training.

I explained them about the work details, gave them advance payment and with an incredibly serious face, they swore loyalty.

It seems that the days here are a lot easier than in Asora. So that they don't slack off, I must discipline them every now and then. We are in a situation where we can't secure sufficient employers, so I thought I laid out quite the strict conditions though…

The conditions here are that they will be working for 10 hours each day with only one weekly holiday you know? It will be like living-in so even if daily necessities are guaranteed, for them to be this happy, just what kind of life were they leading in Asora? It should be mainly about correcting them, so it shouldn't be putting that much pressure on them.

They were happy that they would be eating meals before working and at noon and also that they would have free time after finishing work. They cried happily while asking me if it was really fine to eat out. It's not like they were thrown in an isolated cell at Asora and guarded 24/7. How exaggerated.

Last night at the time when Tomoe, Mio, Shiki and I were doing the closings of our discussion, it turned out that two eldwas will be send as well. These ones seem to have experience as staffs in the small store at Tsige, so I intent to frankly depend on them.

The initial members will be them, me and Shiki. In the end, when I tried asking the guild about interviews and abilities, they told me that the usual is to employ and then teach them. It seems like they don't seek for abilities

beforehand. Not only that, the job offers are something rare and the cases of company's shopkeeper employing friends and family members are high. It seems like requests for part timers are not usual in this world. With worried faces, they asked me if I wanted to have the guild provide some people, but for now I refused.

And so, our numbers are totally not enough (at least for me), but for the store policy I am aiming for, these members have sufficient capability.

The first forte of this store will be that it will be opening late at night, when the night entertainment people and customers are returning home. When we have gathered people, I plan on having it operate ordinarily. Luckily, in this town there are no policies regarding the time a store that sells medication or miscellaneous goods should open. It's just that all the stores think about the balance of customer numbers and security, so they close at evening, which in this world is at 18:00. In short, as long as there is enough safety, one is able to open at night and take all the customers in that hour, probably. Also, it would be nice if the miscellaneous stores that sell medicine remember our name.

It's just that I don't know how many customers are at night and if I should really go with this opening time, and I have to think if I should aim to be a convenience store. In this world, the people that work until late at night are not as many as I thought. I think it is a special case because it is Academy Town, but even with that.

That's why, depending on the circumstances, I am thinking about doing direct deliveries at night. In that case, I would have to think about how to receive the

orders. We will have to do various test runs, but the thing about opening at night will be done as an experiment to see how it goes.

Ah, that's right. Now that I think about expectations, I remember that these are not all the members.

Tomoe said something about sending a useful one along with the eldwas. That Tomoe said was useful, so I think I can expect something. She herself has gone to the battlefield I was before to investigate, so she isn't here and can't come. Mio seems to have a previous engagement as well and didn't seem to be so attached to coming to Academy Town. She must be making connections with people aside from me. I am a bit happy.

"It's a surprise after all", is what Tomoe said while smiling, so I feel slightly uneasy though…

I finished changing and walk outside the room.

At the indoors of a place where people are not present yet.

I walk down from the second floor where my room is, to the first floor where the store is.

That's right, since 3 days ago, Shiki and I have already vacated from the inn and been living at the second floor of the store.

The number of rooms at the second floor is 6. Shiki and I have a room each, the forest onis will have one room, eldwas one room and the surprise person will have one room. The storeroom is at the first floor for now, so the second floor is completely a residence area. The forest

Onis and eldwas will be changing places and returning to Asora every now and then, so I am not sure if those rooms will actually be used for sleeping though.

Each room is about 4 to 6 tatamis. It's smaller than the rooms at Asora, but maybe because of Shiki's interior design reform, the sense of the inside is pretty well done. I also participated in that, but I despaired at my lack of interior design sense in the middle of it and left it in the hands of Shiki. I noticed it when reforming the store as well, but it seems that Shiki has unexpectedly good sense in this. Even though he was a former skeleton.

Pulling myself together, I check the interior of the store that was created by my instructions and Shiki's sense. Last night, I stayed up until late at night to check the goods line up and confirming the inventory. It felt bad to leave it to someone else, so I unintentionally stayed until late in things like changing the position of the spittoon, confirming that the shelf of the special products doesn't obstruct the path of the customers…

While thinking that I was doing the same thing, I repeated it several times.

And as I moved my hands with a wry smile, I noticed that a faint light was coming from outside.

Finally huh.

I plan on opening at evening so it is still not the time yet, but even so, seeing the sun rise reaffirms my determination.

For now, I plan on using the medicines Shiki made, the

energy drink I suggested, unusual southern fruits (in short, Asora), and also armor repairs by the eldwas. About the armor, I decided that instead of selling armor, we will just accept repair petitions. I received a report saying that people are placing a lot of armor petitions in Tsige and are creating quite the pressure.

Cutting the fruits of Asora in small sizes so that they don't know what it is and put them in a container to sell, is also one of the reasons for their achievements in Tsige. While the fruit in itself is 'effective', we have discovered that there's a bit of a problem with the seed. That's why we cut the unusual fruits to make them easier to eat, is what we make them believe and remove the seeds beforehand. The refrigeration installations are easily made with magic and it is so convenient it makes me believe it surpasses science.

Regarding the medicines, we will be selling the wound medication Shiki advertised, generic poison antidotes, fever, pain-killer and cold medicine that works for various purposes, and also a strengthening medication that increases your abilities temporarily. Each one of them has been adjusted and limited into common sense level (probably), so I can have peace of mind.

Thinking about it calmly, I consider that this store, instead of having a lot of customers flowing in the first day, it is more the type that slowly gathers popularity and waits to gain regulars. Today it is fine if we attract people who are interested in the energy drink and the fruits, since it will serve as a seed for the future. If we disperse too many of them, it might create trouble, so I have already decided on the limit we will be selling in a

day. It would be nice if it goes well. I can't help but feel uneasy.

Today I don't have lectures, so I can stay in the store when it opens. At night I should go to Asora and tell Tomoe and Mio about how the first day went.

I walk outside and look at the sign that's at the top of the entrance which has written "Kuzunoha". Writing that only we can read. It may become a minus point, but I unconsciously did it. I don't regret it. I did add the translation at the top anyways.

I decided on the material of the sign just because I liked the smell of it, but it gives that Japanese feeling and it's pretty nice. The eldwas also praised the material quality. The Hinoki cypress might be quite the tree.

Looking at the sign that has the name of the store, I resolve myself and returned inside the store.

◇◆◇◆◇◆◇◆

The time is morning 10:00 o'clock. While I have the two forest oni girls and Shiki clean the store's interior, I receive a call from Beren-san which I haven't received for a long time.

It was to notify me that the two eldwas are ready to be sent. I do as he says and open a gate in the second floor and receive the two eldwas that came.

The person that came from behind them.

It was a person I feel I have seen before. Is he the helper?

But for him to be hyuman, what a surprise.

However, have I met him somewhere?

“Long time no see, boss＜danna＞”

He seems to know me. That means this sensation of not being able to remember is actually real. But, I don’t remember having a hyuman call me boss.

A bad feeling subtly rises in my mouth. Is that a hint? My body seems to remember.

Anyways, a hyuman huh. In that case, I have to use written communication. What a pain.

“B-Boss? I was instructed to help boss here by sis Tomoe though”

Sis Tomoe? More and more I can’t tell who he is.

Short cut silver hair, high stature and slender arms and legs. Because of that, he gives the impression of thin, but his whole body has proper muscles. His chin is pointed and his eyes are slanted, one can feel a wildness in them. The light that resides in his eyes that transmits composure and gives a cool feeling… cool?

Uhm. For some reason, I feel like I drank something disgusting… Ah, I think I am remembering.

[Could you be, a person I met in Tsige?]

It’s vague, but I ask him with that kind of feeling.

“S-So horrible! Could it be, you forgot about me?!”

[Sorry, there's been so much lately]

"It's me, Lyme! Lyme Latte, Boss! The adventurer Boss let go before"

Oh!

Now that he mentions, there was a disgusting name like that! Right right, Lyme Latte. It didn't feel tasty. Ah～, so it's him.

"… It seems you have remembered" (Lyme)

[Yeah, I let Tomoe handle this, but why is it that you were sent here?]

That's right. If I remember correctly, Lyme Latte had his loved dagger broken by Tomoe and on top of that, Mio robbed him, so I had the eldwas create a decent sword and had Tomoe give it to him through the guild.

I thought that was all our connection was about though? Did Tomoe do something?

"After that, I received the sword from Sis Tomoe. It was in a class I have never seen before. I felt like my hips were gonna lose out" (Lyme)

Eh? I told Tomoe to leave it in the hands of the guild and told the eldwas to not make an absurd weapon though?

"Since then, Sis has been keeping an eye on me and in times she even let me accompany her in requests" (Lyme)

I haven't heard of this… Tomoe.

"She even said something pleasant like "I have

capability”” (Lyme)

Lyme scratches his nose happily with his index finger.

“Of course, I still don’t have the skills to use such a great weapon. Even so, I still want to help out Sis and Boss who have expectations of me. I may be undeserving of this, but I have come here to help by the orders of Sis Tomoe!” (Lyme)

… Tomoe, what in the world did you teach him in this few months?

Lyme looks at the katana that is half-drawn and has the length of a short sword, with determined eyes. S-She gave him a katana. That, instead of a dagger…

The vermillion scabbard shines vividly and draws one’s eyes. Because he is holding the scabbard, I can see the hilt perfectly. Around the hilt I can see diamond shaped drawings lined up and in the guard there’s some sort of flower pattern carved. That guard is the same as Tomoe’s one. I have seen it before.

Instead of calling it a coincidence, I think it is more of a move that Tomoe used in order to win him over. How to say it, for a dragon, she is able to read the hearts of hyumans.

“At times I report her the sketchy occurrences in Tsige and at times I receive training. Every day is so fun I can’t help but be elated!” (Lyme)

[I see]

I can clearly tell that the person himself doesn’t regret it

at all. Then, isn't it fine?

"Yes! And so, Sis requested me to help Kuzunoha Company and here I am. Go ahead, you can even use me in frauds if you want, Boss!" (Lyme)

Lyme says in one breath and falls onto one knee, lowering his head deeply.

Tomoe, could it be you… were using him as a spy in Tsige? What a scary person. I'm glad she is an ally.

I still can't bring myself to trust him completely, but at least he is a person Tomoe can judge safe to bring to Asora. Let's rely on him.

But this guy, he is the person with the highest level in Tsige, right? Is it okay to take him away?

By the way, in Academy Town there is a main office of the Adventurer Guild, but there is no section where one can accept requests. That's why, it is hard for adventurers to gain money here. Obviously, the number of adventurers is low.

[I am happy that you say I can use you and I will be relying on you, but you are the number one adventurer in Tsige right? Is it okay to be here?]

"No need to worry. I am already not the number one after all. Right now, the party of Toa is at the top. Also, please refer to me as Lyme with no honorifics" (Lyme)

[I see, right now Toa-san and the others are top huh]

The girl and the others that were sticking like suckerfish

onto Tomoe have grown in a way huh. The day they once again step into the inside of the wasteland might be close.

“Yeah, they probably have an objective now. They are frantically aiming for higher heights. I think that’s one would call growing” (Lyme)

[It would be great if that’s the case. As a senpai of the adventurers, I feel like I can believe you]

“… I am no longer a senpai though” (Lyme)

[What do you mean?]

“Yes. The moment I decided to give my life to Sis Tomoe, I reported my retirement at the guild” (Lyme)

[Retire?]

I tried to continue writing calmly, but inside me, I was quite altered. Retired he says. As in quitting as an adventurer?!

“I want to see what Sis and Boss are aiming for. Surprisingly, I am not regretting it at all” (Lyme)

H-He hasn’t been brainwashed right?

What can Tomoe be aiming for aside from Edo? Or more like, regarding me, I am trying to look for the tracks of my parents, hit the Goddess once and do business. Those are the only objective-like things I have you know?

What did she indoctrinate Lyme with? I’m beginning to get scared.

[If you have no regrets, then I won't say anything more. In this place the only work I have for you is store tending, is that okay?]

I think it is an incredibly wasteful way though. He is a person that would even be useful if I bring him to the Academy after all.

"I don't mind. Sis also asked me to keep an eye on the town's rumors and trends though…" (Lyme)

What should I do? Is what Lyme's eyes are asking me.

She also intends to use him as a spy here huh. I see, it certainly wouldn't be bad to have him gather information. Inside the Academy I can ask Shiki, but if it's the whole town, he might be better suited. He looks like he is accustomed already and there's also the fact that it is a difficult task for the forest onis and eldwas, who are demi-humans.

Right, let's try leaving it to Akua, Eris and Lyme; I will study. Lyme also temporarily gathered and acted as the head of the adventurers in Tsige. Then, he should have skills in dealing with people.

[Understood. I will leave that to you as well. Just, when there's a need for money, don't hesitate to tell me. Before stepping into dangerous information, make sure to report to me first and we will decide. Those type of things are not of my taste]

"Roger. Then, without delay, let's see the goods while I help cleaning" (Lyme)

It was unexpected, but I have obtained one hyuman.

Moreover, he played quite the active role.

After obtaining Lyme Latte, Kuzunoha Company's opening day was able to finish safely. Thanks to him skillfully moving around, the distinguished people of the merchant guild and the influential people of the land, even when they suddenly appeared; Shiki, Lyme and I were able to somehow manage. It's the first day of opening, so there will obviously be people coming to greet us. I was totally oblivious. That was a close one.

Regarding the results of our first day, the requests for armor repairing were zero. Even if we take into account the student level armor that they are provided, it is still armor that they entrust their life to, so trust is important. We can't help the results in this. The fruit cuts that I prepared were gone by early afternoon and the extra ones lined up at evening were instantly sold out. About the medicines, each were sold slowly and at evening the students that Shiki advertised in the lecture came and the medicines' sells increased in an instant. Maybe I should have restricted the number each person can buy.

Probablybecause they weren't familiar with it, the cold medicine didn't sell that much. Well, when real sick persons appear and the effects begin to show, the situation should change. I wonder how the composite cold medicine works in this world. When Shiki heard the concept from me, he said something about being ground-breaking and went to develop in high spirits, so it is probably the type that he didn't put that much mind into. He felt down when it showed the lowest effect rank. If I have to translate what he said, it would be that it is an all-powerful medicine against light illnesses, or

something like that? All-powerful is quite the exaggerated word, so I am not really sure.

The one that unexpectedly did well was the energy drink. The people that bought medicines, most of them bought a number of energy drinks. Regarding the strengthening medications, there wasn't a single sell. Thinking about its effect, it is more an item for adventurers, so it might be better to sell this one at Tsige. The armor manufacturing is temporarily stopped, so I was thinking of lining up a new product. Also, I feel like when exams come in the Academy, it might even get restriction order.

Anyways.

Kuzunoha Company has only begun moving.

Business rivals will appear, doubts with the merchandize we handle, and we might even receive pressure from the people.

From now on will be the true company management. I don't know how far a teenager with an inhuman face like me can go, but I will do my best.

Chapter 88: Gossip – Tomoe, Royalty And Hero

Tomoe went to the lake bank. It was wide, deep, and so clear that even in Asora you wouldn't be able to find one like this. It isn't marked in maps, but it is certainly something that exists in this world.

Wearing Japanese clothing that can't be found locally, she looked at the water surface in front of her with a simple pleased expression.

This girl who came here after her master Makoto returned to Academy Town, headed further north from there and arrives at the place where her master had fought. The girl, seeing that lake and thinking what in the world happened, finds some sort of thing that was in a hollowed space and it explains everything.

She does a single breath. Tomoe, who had heard the story from her master and left, couldn't help but laugh. Holding her stomach, she literally rolled on the floor laughing.

The nonchalant words of her master, the words that one would even ignore, seeing the difference in realities was just too funny. 'My last attack was probably on the level of pestering' is what her master said, but to think that one attack created a lake. She couldn't help being happy.

When she finally managed to calm herself to the bare minimum, she returned to the lakeshore and looks at the lake with a different impression from the first time she saw it.

“To create a lake from pestering. Really, Waka is truly a person who doesn’t bore me. I would have wanted, not to see it from memories, but to experience it personally”

The person that explained her the situation was a hyuman man who was a former soldier. When Tomoe took a peek at his memories, she saw that he was dragged into that attack while he was retreating. Losing one leg and somehow managing to survive, he stopped working as a soldier and is now living his life at the lake shore that is prohibited entry for now. He, who was in his midlife, had high experience as a soldier and there were many times when he had life threatening experiences. However, after he met with that attack, he has completely deteriorated. It was like if he was carried away by religion, he left the money with his family and began living his life here.

“What did he think and how he felt. Those kind of feelings became like a diffused light and, sadly, couldn’t see anything properly”

Moreover, he didn’t look at the fired attack. Thinking about the circumstances, there’s no doubt it was her master, but the only thing he knew is that her master had appeared suddenly in the battlefield. And the being that appeared from that golden light wasn’t a hero that appeared to save the people, but a being that had come to bring judgment in stead of God. They called him “Devil” by their own convenience. No one knows who began calling him that way, but maybe because that man liked the name, he began calling it over and over. Tomoe didn’t really blame him for that. Maybe because she thought of something after hearing the words of the

broken man.

“Being a person and at the same time a demon. Because he executed both equally, he was called a devil huh. I see. Certainly, for Waka no matter if it is a person, a demon, a dragon or a god; if he considers you an obstacle, he will eliminate you. He is no agent of the Goddess nor an executioner, but that name certainly defines Waka well”

After doing a monologue with an expression filled with deep emotions, she followed the orders of her master and started investigating. Just like how she spoke with that man first thing in the morning, she searched for people that live at the lake shore and hear their story, and at night gather information from people that are not hyuman. The lake was close to Limia, but Tomoe didn’t step in there, and that day she lodged at the inn of the closest village. From what she heard in the inn, they said that, even if the lake was made not too long ago, powerful mamono don’t get close for some reason and moreover, maybe because it linked up with a number of rivers, fishes have begun to move there and it has heavily assisted in the daily life of the village.

(It’s probably because of the remnants of Waka’s magic power. It may be slight-ja, but what’s left is keeping the mamonos away. Also, if there are demon beasts that were present that day, even if the magic power disappears, they wouldn’t get close. More like, for hyumans to live so close when it hasn’t been even 1 month is strange-no ja. Now then, what should I do tomorrow? I will continue what I was doing and check out the other half that I haven’t checked yet, and I still can’t get a clear idea of

how to stop the Goddess power and the interference of thought transmission. This one will probably take quite a bit of time)

The next day.

The prediction of Tomoe hit in the blank. There were a number of settlements, but there was no visible progress in the investigation.

Just, this lake is inside the Limia Kingdom and it is in a place close to its capital, and yet, even if it's in an inconspicuous lake shore, Tomoe was surprised that demons were living there. For an enemy nation to live right in enemy territory is normally something impossible. Moreover, in that place lived demons and hyumans.

They don't seem like spies. It seems that the demons who survived that day left the army and returned to live hidden here. When she checked their memories, there was the attack of Makoto, and Tomoe was surprised. The soldiers said that war is pointless and after being entranced by the destruction light and receiving injuries, no matter if they were hyumans or demons, they began feeling something that surpasses shared awareness and began living together. It was truly a strange scene.

Also, in terms of gatherings, there's also the appearance of the devil.

This also left Tomoe dumbfounded.

A tall beautiful woman that even with a blue coat wrapped around her body, she still exuded the sexiness of

a woman. No, it was a big red coat she dragged around.

A never before seen demi-human that emitted a golden light from its whole body. Its left was blue and its right it wore a red vestment. A young man who held an unworldly beauty when naked.

There were quite a lot of testimonies. Moreover, all of them were perfectly wrong. Just with what she remembered, there were at least ten different statements on the devil's appearance. It was to the point one would question if it was a monster with different forms.

Since she was already in Limia, she thought she might as well go see the face of the hero, but from the information she gathered, it seems that the Limia hero is currently not in the region and it was a credible source so that day Tomoe decided to return to Asora.

Just in case she used the testimony that it was a man as base and that night Tomoe made a number of questions to Makoto.

"You, what did you say I was?" (Makoto)

Is the answer that was returned. Moreover, for some reason Makoto said "it will be light" with a scary smile and Tomoe was forced to accompany him in his bow training. She felt like she was walking in hell while alive.

While dragging her body, she was somehow able to arrive at her bed. She did feel like it was unreasonable, but this was her fault.

Because the questions were like this after all.

“Did Waka shine in the battlefield, like, literally?”

“Do you like to wear a coat with half blue half red?”

“Have you been naked in the middle of a battle?”

Those were the kind of questions. So Makoto had the right to get angry.

And so, at the third day.

This day, Tomoe went to the east bank of the lake in the morning, at a place with low number of people.

“Fumu, in this place, aside from the magic power of Waka, there’s no other thing that stands out-ja na. In the end, there was no information about the ring Waka said sealed the power of the Goddess. That it doesn’t even leave remnants might be because it really just functions for a short amount of time. A disposable tool-jaro. Because last night Waka was so intense, the joints in my body still hurt, so maybe I should leave the investigation of the lake’s interior for a later time. Hmph, Waka showed no maturity. I admit that I didn’t choose my words properly, but there was no need to chase me around with his certain hit arrows. Let’s just rest in Asora for today… Hn?”

Tomoe mutters words of complain while walking into the forest of the lake bank, but she suddenly stops her muttering.

Hyuman presence. Moreover, numerous.

Tomoe changes her senses. Even if she didn’t go to the point of taking combat stance, she is now in a state

where she is slightly vigilant. To meet hyumans isn't really that much to be conscious of, but it's because she felt a number of dangerous presences in that group.

Instead of encountering inside the many trees, it is better to…, is what Tomoe thought and returns to an open space in the lake shore. There was a nice stump there to sit on. She sits with her body and gaze facing the lake. Of course, her senses were directed at the back where she still felt the numerous presences.

(It seems that… they are wearing quite the extravagant equipment. It looks like they even have attack methods that are effective against dragons-ja. It's hard to believe that they came here aiming for me, but let's not lower the guard. 3 persons huh)

Tomoe silently analyzes the other party. If they don't make contact with her, then that's fine. However, in the case that they make some sort of contact, she was thinking of what kind of façade she will take.

The presences get closer. It doesn't seem like they noticed her, but it was a distance where they could see her. The three presences have advanced till the end of the forest.

(Is their objective this lake? It's impossible that they came to sightsee, but if they are here to investigate like me, I could understand. In that case, it is fine to act like an adventurer or a company employer)

After deciding how she would act, from Tomoe's back, a somewhat high-pitched voice of a man was heard.

"Samurai?!"

“Hm?”

It was a word she was used to, but it was the first time someone called her that way in this world. Tomoe reflexively turned with a smile.

◇◆◇◆◇◆◇◆

＜Translator note: This part is confusing. There’s a man and women and Japanese doesn’t have words to determine gender in some parts＞

“I see, you are a merchant’s bodyguard” (Man)

“Umu, it’s called Kuzunoha Company. It’s still a small place though. I serve my master in that place. I work as a guard, as a merchant; well, I do anything” (Tomoe)

Tomoe, who had introduced herself as a merchant’s follower, had the eyes of the woman turned at her as if researching her. But she didn’t mind it and just says the name of her company.

“… You are using *Washi*? From what I see, you are only in your 20’s though?” (Man) ＜Washi is an old way of saying I＞

“Uh? Ah, well, that’s just how it is-ja. But to ask for the age of a woman you just met is quite rude you know, brat” (Tomoe)

“B-Brat?!” (Man)

Tomoe who had judged that he was clearly younger than her and called him brat, the boy clearly shows anger and his voice gets rough.

“For a merchant, you don’t choose your words” (Woman)

The woman that had her eyes as if researching Tomoe, launched words that were mixed with criticism. The small girl that was at the woman’s side probably didn’t like Tomoe’s comment and lightly inflated her cheeks and glared at her.

From Tomoe’s back, the group that appeared was one man and two women. One of the women was at the latter half of her teens, the other was at an age one could call child. The man had a young face and make’s one think that he is probably in his middle teens. Their way of moving their bodies was quite good and the personal appearance of the three was neat. Also, instead of calling Tomoe an adventurer, her appearance gave more of an impression of white knight.

“I don’t have any name to call you anyways. I saw you in the age to call you brat, but was I wrong? From what I see, you guys give me the impression of being a group of knights or nobles, but what business do you have in this kind of place-ja?” (Tomoe)

“I’m not a brat! I have a proper name, Tomoki!” (Tomoki)

“To-Tomoki-sama. Today we are travelling incognito so…”

“… Onii-chan”

“Ah, without thinking I…” (Tomoki)

“Hoh～, Tomoki-dono huh. If calling you brat displeased you, I apologize. Sorry. And so, the remaining two, who

are you guys?" (Tomoe)

When Tomoe turns her gaze away from the silver<?> haired young man, Tomoki, she looks at the two girls and urges them with her words. <Maybe a typo for blond, don't remember him having silver hair>

"… I am Lily. A person serving Tomoki-sama" (Lily)

"I am Mora. A companion of Onii-chan" (Mora)

After slight hesitation, the woman who was older, responded to Tomoe with a clear voice. And maybe because she was pushed, the girl that was hiding behind Lily's clothes names herself.

(Lily, and also Tomoki huh. Thinking about the attributes of their weapons… It should be proper to see him as the hero of Gritonia huh. An otherworldler just like Waka. It stirs great interest but…)

On the other hand, Tomoe nods at the two's introduction while guessing their identity. From their names and equipment, she had a general idea, but her interest was mostly concentrated in Tomoki.

"Lily-dono and Mora huh. Then once again, my name is Tomoe from Kuzunoha Company. Now then. Returning to the previous question, what are you guys doing here? I'm sightseeing this just-made lake, but from what I see in your heavy equipment, I can only think that you have a different objective" (Tomoe)

"?!"

Maybe they were astonished by the fact that she

mentioned their equipment, Tomoki and the others show surprise. They have a number of strong weapons in possession, but they are mostly stowed away or deactivated and in a concealed state. They didn't think she would point them out.

"If there's a need to move in secret from Limia it must be…" (Tomoe)

"A-Anyways! That thing you are holding there, could it be a katana? Can I look at it for a bit?" (Tomoki)

Tomoki suddenly changes the topic to the two katanas that were hanging at Tomoe's waist.

"Hm? Do you have an interest in my katanas? Now that I think about it, you said something about samurai, right? I don't mind you looking. There you go" (Tomoe)

Tomoe takes the short one from the two katanas and gives it to Tomoki. Receiving the katana, Tomoki's eyes shone and quickly takes the handle into his hands.

(What. He doesn't have any interest in the workmanship of the scabbard and the guard's design huh. How boring. The heroes came from another world just like Waka, but it seems that even if it's an otherworldler it doesn't mean it will be a person I can look forward to-ja na. Like this, the one at Limia is also doubtful)

Tomoe was disappointed in Tomoki's conduct. Since before giving him the katana, she has been feeling discomfort from the gaze this thin silver haired man was giving her. Even so, she prioritized observation and didn't let her expression show a single clue of the

impression she has on him.

His way of moving, magic power, speech and conduct.

Tomoe, who has a master called Makoto, had a bit of interest in the heroes who came from the same world as him. Not only that, from the information she has obtained before her eyes, she couldn't help but despair at the Gritonia Hero Tomoki.

Comparing his way of moving to the adventurers in Tsige, he is pretty decent. He probably would be inferior to the girl Toa, who had accompanied Makoto once.

His magic power, not only was it lower than Makoto, it was even lower than Tomoe herself. Comparing him to her self before the pact, he would be one turn higher.

His speech and conduct are out of question. In that area, he doesn't have any difference from the idiotic adventurers you find anywhere. That's how Tomoe judged him.

"Eh? Why? I can't take it out from its scabbard" (Tomoki)

Obviously. If anyone could unsheathe it, no matter how low rank it is, she wouldn't give her weapon. It's a katana that, though imperfect, was given to her by the eldwas. It's on a different level from the prototypes. To unsheathe the two katanas on Tomoe's waist, you must be the owner Tomoe or Makoto or the craftsmen that maintain it. That's how it was made.

Also, the most important part…

Was his attitude of not even asking permission from the

owner to unsheathe the weapon. This left Tomoe astonished.

“Hm? Could it be, you want to see its blade? Sorry, that is something I have made so only I can draw it” (Tomoe)

Saying that, Tomoe stretches her hand as if telling him to return the katana. However, Tomoki didn’t show any signs of returning it.

“No, there is no way! I can use any kind of weapon. That’s why, this one as well…” (Tomoki)

He hasn’t even taken out the inner part of the sword and there’s not even a slight sight of the short sword, but the boy still tried to desperately draw it.

(Yareyare)

Amazed from the bottom of her heart, Tomoe takes the katana from the boy who was holding it with both hands as if it were the most natural thing.

“Wa?!” (Tomoki)

Not understanding how the katana was stolen from him, Tomoki’s surprise was in vain.

On the other hand, seeing Tomoe’s movements, Lily strengthens her vigilance. Even she didn’t understand what Tomoe did, but Tomoki and her, and also Mora who was beside her, were surprised by the movement she used to take the katana which they couldn’t perceive. Right now, Lily regretted the fact that they didn’t have the knight Ginebia accompany them.

“Please don’t treat it so violently. It’s an important partner after all. If you want to see its blade, here, is this fine?” (Tomoe)

Tomoe, in front of the eyes of the three, at the same time as she recovers her katana from Tomoki, takes off the sheath and unsheathes it in an instant.

“Incredible…”

“What is that”

“Beautiful…”

From the three of them, breaths of admiration and words of wonder leaked out.

The beauty of the sword. The peculiarity of that sword’s blade which one wouldn’t be able to find in other swords. The three of them were almost entranced by that sensation.

No matter where you look: the handle coil, guard, scabbard; there’s no doubt they were fascinated by the craftsmanship that was performed in them.

The sword blade that has not touched the water and yet looked like it was wet. That wasn’t because of the forged metal, it proved that this was a rare article that had been endowed with high skills.

Not only that. The moment it was unsheathed, the surroundings grew cold and the temperature began to lower. This increased the freezing impression it gave off, but at the same time, the three who were overwhelmed by the katana didn’t notice the spell she casted at the

moment she drew her sword.

“Tto. Even though it is noon, this part is cold. Staying here too long might affect the body’s health” (Tomoe)

With a natural gesture, Tomoe sheathed her katana.

“Are you satisfied? Then, I have other things I have to do in a hurry, so with this I excuse myself” (Tomoe)

(Geez. To think the hero would only be at this level, what a waste of time-jatta na. He is like a kid who got an edged weapon that can cut well)

“W-Wait please!” (Tomoki)

“… I did say, I was in a hurry though?” (Tomoe)

Tomoe turns as if it was a pain.

Confirming that she stopped, Tomoki whispers something to Lily’s ear. Hearing what he said, the girl nods.

“You said your name was Tomoe-san right. That weapon, seems to be quite the rare article. How about it, I will ready whatever price you ask, so could you please give it to us?” (Lily)

(That trade, it isn’t done by the hero but by the woman huh. Lily, I see, she is a princess right. So that means she is the wallet in this group. But to want a weapon you can’t even unsheathe, does he have no distinction or does he have some sort of plan? Well, I don’t have any intentions of giving it to him though)

“I thought I told you this is a katana only I can use-ja.

Sorry, but I don't have any intentions of trading it for money. If you want a katana no matter what, you can go to the remote land Tsige. If you do well, you can obtain one-jaro" (Tomoe)

"… I was thinking of keeping this a secret, but guess I have no choice. Tomoe-san, the person here, Tomoki-sama, is the hero that the Goddess-sama has send. I am the princess of Gritonia, Princess Lily" (Lily)

"Hoh~, you guys are the hero and princess! What a surprise!" (Tomoe)

Tomoe shows surprise at the identity that was finally revealed. But at the truth that she already knew, she internally smiled wryly at the shamelessness.

"I will plead you once more. For the sake of the hyumans, no, for the sake of this world's future, could you please cooperate? I may be someone who has abandoned her position, but I am still a princess. I can even help Tomoe-sama open a store for the Kuzunoha Company in our country. No, I promise you" (Lily)

Tomoe narrows her eyes at Lily's words.

"Oh, scary scary. The moment you take out your position as princess you change into threatening? Mentioning the name of my company makes me cower in fear~. Also, even if you are a royalty-sama, to use such intonation. Just how deliberate can you be" (Tomoe)

"No, in no way did I say this with such intentions. I am already not in a position where I can call myself royalty. To lower my head to a person who will provide

assistance to hero-sama is a given” (Lily)

(Tomoe, huh. This is the first time I have heard of Kuzunoha Company, but seeing how the conversation goes, it is most likely a company that has just opened a store in Tsige. That place is located at the border of the world, so it isn’t a place I can’t ignore anyways, so maybe I should investigate. That weapon, from what I have seen, it is one with quite the depth, so if there is a craftsman that can create it, I might be able to capture him and have him work in the production of guns) (Lily)

“I see. I can’t help but feel like you are thinking about a lot of dangerous things though” (Tomoe)

“… Please don’t joke around” (Lily)

“Anyways, I have no intentions of giving it” (Tomoe)

“… Then, it is fine. I don’t need the katana” (Tomoki)

“Onii-chan?!”

“Tomoki-sama, is that okay?!” (Lily)

“Hoh～ what pleasant words but, what do you really mean?” (Tomoe)

“Just like how Lily said before, I am a hero. I am fighting for the sake of this world. Defeat the demon lord and after that I will create a peaceful world. Tomoe-san, for that sake, please lend us your power” (Tomoki)

Looking straight at Tomoe’s eyes, he makes a serious face and confesses he is a hero, inviting her to be his companion. Tomoe admired his manner for a second. It

was literally a second though.

(… Just by looking at his words, it is splendid-ja. But that impolite gaze that has been checking my body for a while now and that way of handling my katana. Also… the eyes he is currently using to look at me. When I thought he was at least able to talk while looking at one's eyes… this is the enticing type huh. How stupid. Defeating the Demon Lord and after that peace, he says. I can already clearly see his attachment to power. If I want to, I would be able to see this idiot's memories, but he is so transparent I don't even need to. It's making me feel sick) (Tomoe)

When she silently takes his gaze, the enticing power that Tomoki was emitting increased in strength instantly. It was a strengthening that one wouldn't be able to see its effect, but even so, Tomoe took it refreshingly. Lily probably noticed what Tomoki was trying to do, she watched over the situation.

A space of silence.

Mora, who was behind Lily, looked like she decided something and took a step forward.

Tomoe shifts her gaze from Tomoki and looks at Mora who had showed movement with a refreshed appearance.

"What is it, girl?" (Tomoe)

"Y-You are a dragon right?!" (Mora)

"… Hoh~, why do you think that? No, wait. I see, you said your name was Mora right. You are a person who uses dragons huh. Now that I think about it, hyumans

can be born with the power to use dragons, though it is pretty rare. It is said that it will never happen with demons but… I see, so you are like that" (Tomoe)

"Uh"

"So you smelled the scent of a dragon in me? But too bad-ja, just as how you see, I am not a dragon. And if I am dragon, what did you intend to do?" (Tomoe)

"Lies! It's not only the scent of a dragon, I can clearly feel the power of a dragon in you. You are quite the strong dragon!" (Mora)

(Dragon?! Mora is a dragon tamer, obviously her ability to detect dragons is better than anyone else. Moreover, she said she was quite strong. In that case, the dragons around here would be the "waterfall" dragon. Is she somewhere around that kin? Then I can understand why that sword is like that. It looked like a water element one after all) (Lily)

"Ku… Ku kuku! Too bad-ja, but I'm not a waterfall dragon princess. It is nice to ponder, but it is better not to jump into weird conclusions" (Tomoe)

"Wa… eh?"

"No matter how strong you are, if you are a dragon, you should listen to what I say! Tomoe! Become my and Onii-chan's strength! (Mora)

At some point in time, Mora held a transparent ball in both hands facing Tomoe and voiced out words with power.

On the other hand, Tomoe had been ignoring the words of Mora and urging her to continue, but when she said, Tomoe, without any honorifics, her eyebrows twitched.

"… The dragon that is attached to this girl must really adore lolis. There was practically no knowledge in enslavement there, and not only that, it doesn't even look like you know what you are doing. You idiot" (Tomoe)

"Ah, eh? Tomoe, just called me…" (Mora)

"Fool! How long do you plan on throwing me your stupid thoughts you lass?! I will admit your petty talent. If you have good affinity, you would be able to make medium class dragons obey you practically with no conditions, but that's how far your talent goes" (Tomoe)

With a thunderous voice, Tomoe erases the submission urging thoughts that were being transmitted from the transparent ball. That expression was the most severe one the three of them have seen until now, and was clearly looking down on their everything. Especially the girl who was exposed to Tomoe's cold gaze, she was trembling in fear.

"W-Why?" (Mora)

Mora couldn't understand what was happening. There's no helping it. If it was a dragon, no matter if it's a stray one, she would be able to tame it and hear the wishes of Mora. The being in front of her was emitting a pronounced dragon scent from her body and was clearly a being related to dragons.

And yet, not only did she not lower her head, there

wasn’t even a sign of obeying.

“Looking at you, you are probably compatible with fire type dragons. They are idiots who have uselessly big wings and are only good for flying and I despise them, but it seems like the fellow who is serving you has quite the perverted inclination-ja na” (Tomoe)

“D-Don’t speak ill of Nagi!” (Mora)

“Don’t bawl!” (Tomoe)

“Hih!”

“That so called Nagi isn’t showing any signs of helping her master in need though? You still don’t understand? The difference in strength between you and me. Rather, why don’t I show you right here?” (Tomoe)

(Kuh, damn it. In the course of events, I have ended up angered. As expected, if I want to put my hands on the hero, I would have to get permission of Waka first. But this group of idiots, just how hopeless are they?) (Tomoe)

After accidentally blurting out words driven by anger, Tomoe thinks about her master. Makoto is somewhat mindful about the heroes. Though even if it’s said like that, it doesn’t mean in a cooperative way, but more like just their circumstances and tendencies. In truth, Tomoe, Mio and Shiki who are the closest to Makoto, don’t even know his relationship between the heroes.

If it’s just because they are otherworldlers, then Tomoe and the others wouldn’t hold back, but for heroes that were transported to this world at the same time, they couldn’t help but hesitate asking.

In the time when Tomoe was pondering, Tomoki intruded in the space between her and Mora.

“If Mora did something, I apologize. But, could you please give me your answer to my invitation?” (Tomoki)

He once again gazes at her. For Tomoe, this enticing power is only annoying.

“It’s not to the level where hero has to apologize. Also, you who are facing me with those annoying eyes, is no different from her. Is it because the visitor from another world doesn’t have that much confidence in himself? It is slightly sickening, so can you stop. Of course, my answer is no-ja. I already have a master called Makoto who I have offered myself to” (Tomoe)

“You… You noticed the demon eyes?!” (Tomoki)

“Relax. No matter if you use that kind of power or not, my impression of you would not have changed. It’s just boring. Not only do I not want to fight along with you, I don’t even want to cross blades” (Tomoe)

“Lightning Lance!” (Tomoki)

“?!!”

Seeing Tomoki calling his loved weapon, the two girls stiffen their bodies. But Tomoe looks at him as if looking at a pebble on the roadside, she looked at Tomoki with an inorganic gaze.

“You look like a kid throwing a tantrum-ja na!” (Tomoe)

“Shut up!!” (Tomoki)

Tomoki's lance penetrates Tomoe's right shoulder.

But Tomoe doesn't show any signs of pain, and blood doesn't flow from the wound.

At another place from Tomoki's dumbfounded expression, Tomoe's contour blurred, becaming small grains and dispersing.

"You can't even tell apart if the person you are talking to is an illusion. Truly, foolish. Princess Lily, our meeting here may have been sweet, but let's make it as if it never happened. If you don't even understand the true meaning of this and still begin foolish actions, have in mind that, not long, there will only be one hero remaining" (Tomoe)

Tomoe's voice reverberates in their bodies.

A mist that enshrouds till the knees of an adult.

(When did this mist… It must be an illusion type. "If you don't understand the true meaning" huh. She probably means to not make contact with Kuzunoha Company. No, as long as I don't get the full picture of Tomoe, I should not put my hands on Tsige. Just what in the world is her? I have never heard of a dragon that can read the minds of people) (Lily)

Because of Tomoe's spell, the forest becomes a mist labyrinth.

Tomoki and the others who were in the middle of it, could only absentmindedly stand there.

Chapter 89: Gossip – Mio, Cooking And Hero (1)

“Ehm, seaweed with thickness and hard dried fish… was it?”

A woman that doesn’t fit the port town’s market walks.

The bustling sells of various articles that are unfolding on both sides of the street, and the calls of the shopkeepers that shout with a loud voice.

That the places where there are no stands are the street, makes it a complicated labyrinth with irregular shaped pathways.

The people seen when walking down the road were normally naked on the upper half or wearing a thin shirt. The number of muscular men was high.

She was clearly not familiar in this place, a girl wearing clothes deep indigo blue that were close to black was obviously an existence that was out of place here.

The clothes called kimono is probably an attire that no one in this port town has seen before.

And also, her hair that may or may not reach her shoulders, glossy black hair that has been beautifully trimmed. Her long slit and black eyes, and her vibrant deep red lips. The beauty that emitted conspicuous colors was clear in everyone’s eyes.

Her attire and appearance, with those two combined, make the people walking by turn and look twice. That

person is one of Kuzunoha Companies strongest jewels, Mio.

Her representative Makoto is currently in Academy Town and finished opening a store there. Tomoe who has been acting alongside her, has received a task by Makoto and is in a faraway place, so right now Mio is alone.

But she is not free.

For the sake of pioneering the port town as Makoto told her, she advanced through the north road of Tsige and arrived at this town that is located at the sea.

It isn't that big of a town. Compared to Tsige, the size of this one is clearly smaller.

The other remote regions have a land route for goods distribution called the gold highway, but the growth of this town is slightly restraint.

To walk with hyuman legs and take just a few days, one would be able to raise several questions.

Whatever the case, this location is port town Koran that is blessed to a certain extent, doesn't have a direct connection to the world's border special procurement route and even when they have the potential to receive merchant ships of the highest class, they still haven't reached that scale. A deplorable town.

Even so, there's obviously no need to compare this to Tsige in marine products. There were many ingredients Mio had seen for the first time and were unfolded in the market.

However, it seems that the thing she is looking for or something close to it, she still couldn't find it. Mio stops her feet and sighs.

"I can't find anything close to kelp and skipjack tuna"

What Mio is looking for are ingredients that are pretty common in Makoto's world.

It's just that, this isn't something that Makoto asked for.

After Mio separated from Makoto, she has been enjoying the food and she has mostly visited the famous restaurants and bars in Tsige. Makoto has accompanied her in eating while walking and has been accepting the food he recommended, but even if it's wide, there's still a limit. There are a few where she hasn't visited, but it's clear that she will hit the bottom soon. For Mio who loves Makoto and delicious food, this was a worrying situation.

Then a chance came.

Tomoe nonchalantly said this.

"In that case, isn't it fine for Mio to just make the food Waka likes?"

For Mio, these words were literally a divine revelation.

To make food… HERSELF.

For the girl who just ate the food that was brought to her, the impact of those words made her body stagger. And then she looked at Tomoe with a serious face, as if

looking at a genius.

That's exactly it.

If she makes it herself, she can create what she considers the ideal taste. Even the taste that Makoto wishes for, she might be able to make it as well, is what she thought.

To begin, she tried to recreate the food she has eaten until now. But she was left astonished.

She didn't know the process of cooking at all.

Cut, bake, boil, fry; that level she can manage, but the further steps she just can't.

There are people in Asora who can cook, and she was mostly taught by the orcs in cooking which increased her skills.

Even so, she wasn't able to reach the level of the food she ate in Tsige. Mio, lowering the number of requests she took in the Adventurer Guild, revisited the restaurants and bars and lowered her head to the cooks there.

She challenged a number of times and failed. And Mio who had begun understanding the basic parts of cooking, had felt some sort of respect for the people that she couldn't replicate the food from. That's why, for Mio who wants to be taught the recipe and technique, it was natural to lower her head. On the other hand, the shopkeepers and cooks who saw this, couldn't bear it.

In Tsige, the adventurers and the people related, there is not a single one who doesn't know the existence of Mio. And that person herself is suddenly lowering her head

and asking to teach her cooking.

The cooks showed such respect that one wouldn't be able to tell who was the one asking for a favor, and practically in an instant they accepted her request. Just, there's also the deal about competing stores and secret recipes, so there were parts they couldn't teach her; is what they supplicated Mio with visible sweat. Of course, Mio nods at their words. She told them that it was okay to just teach about some particular foods, and she is not intending to be a hindrance in their business so it was fine to not tell her the secret recipes and techniques.

And so, relinquishing sleep time, Mio went to the cooks' kitchen to get taught and there were cases when she matched times with them and accompanied them. After 1 month, Mio was able to recreate the food, not to a perfect level, but she was able to understand the basic essentials of the food in Tsige and mimic them.

The complex parts like the hand skills and sauce, she still doesn't reach their level, but it's an acquisition rate that would surprise anyone.

This may digress, but Mio who normally treats adventurers coldly, was using formal language with cooks. And because of that, in the restaurants, bars, and inn's which are close to that connotation; her behavior with the adventurers became docile.

And so, now. The objective of Mio in this port town was exactly, the recreation of Japanese food.

The food of her Master Makoto's world. Before heading to the Academy, Makoto explained her about the world

he had come from. And Mio, seeing that it would be impossible to meet that scenery and food, was truly sad. By the way, she really didn't have any particular impression about Makoto's blood-line. Shiki was incredibly excited and made quite the ruckus, so he received the iron fist of Tomoe, but Mio honestly didn't mind what country Makoto was from, no, no matter what world he was from, it wouldn't change. He is just her only master and an irreplaceable existence. That's why, no matter what's in his past, she wouldn't mind. Instead of such boring stuff, her interest in the Japanese food Makoto was eating was more important.

The Japanese food's foundation was different from Tsige's food. Instead of using meat, it gave the impression that they used more marine products and she thought that the port town would serve as some sort of clue, but…

"No good. To begin with, there's not much dried stuff. From the Japanese food I saw in those memories, the only thing I can recreate is the sunny-side fried eggs. I had Tomoe cooperate with me and research for ways to cook, but it seems that the kelp and skipjack tuna are indispensable. The rice and miso are being recreated by Tomoe so, leaving that to her, I should gather various ingredients and learn different ways of cooking, and yet…"

Mio who had resolved herself to someday provide Makoto with Japanese food in Asora, had quite the expectations from the port town, Koran.

However, the truth was that she couldn't find the ingredients and the important dried fish was absolutely

scarce. It was to the point that it made her question if this town didn't actually delve in that kind of manufacturing.

"Dried fish? Things dried in the sun? Hmph, around this area there's no one who would go all the way to dry in order to eat fish and if they plan on carrying it to a faraway place, they normally freeze it"

"In here the most important thing is freshness after all. To go through the trouble of drying it. Well, there might be houses where they dry them for one night but…"

"They are low in numbers but, in places like souvenir and wholesale stores there might be some"

She went around and asked, but the answers that she received were all unreliable. Even so, there was a bit of information regarding dried fish. The problem is the kelp. Even when telling them their characteristics, they all made faces like they haven't heard of it before, making Mio dejected.

After doing a round around the market, Mio decided to go check the beach.

Because she was taught that the place where fishes are dried is in the sandy beach, she thought that maybe she could get some information from the people that actually practice this. She felt like she was clinging to straws.

"Is it that. It makes a peculiar smell. Like raw, or more like… a bad smell I have felt in the city but at the same time different. Fuh~, even though there should be marine plants drifting all around in the beach. Why is it

that I can't find any?"

While viewing the work at a distance, Mio despairs at the fact that there is only fish there. Glancing at one part of the beach, there was a black lump there and Mio noticed that it was washed up seaweed.

In a place with pebbles spread all over and wood put together, a base was made located at an area where the sunlight hits easily. Fishes were placed there. The small ones are left as is and all the others were cut opened.

"Now that I think about it, the smell of fish stinks more than beast meat. I feel like even boiling beast bone for a long time to make Dashi <soup>, there are alsono fitting ingredients for it either. Tomoe-san told me that: "That's where the kelp comes in-nan ja", and said there was a special method. I thought that the basic process behind making soup with beast bone and fish bone as well as the ingredients were practically the same, but maybe that's not the case…"

In the end, she wasn't able to get any new information from the workers. However, she was holding doubts about her own thoughts and gets closer to the black lump located at the beach.

One of the workers said: "That's trash of the sea", but Mio didn't mind.

"There are some that are warm to the touch and ones that are thin. There's quite a lot of types. When I look closely at their color, there's green and blue, and there's even red. The taste is… ara. Crispy and tasty. Saying its trash, what a waste. This one here is… well, the slight

stickiness is worrying, but it is eatable. The lukewarm one has some white powder stuck on it-desu wa ne. Heh～, this one has a strong taste. The aroma is like that of the beach, a nice scent. The white powder is not poison either. From what I have gotten, the parts that are dry get hard but their taste gets stronger. Isn't this quite enough to qualify as ingredients-desu ka? Geez, they really have no insight"

In order to have Tomoe inspect it, Mio looks for ones whose current state is good. The people that were drying fish gathered at a distance and looked at her eccentricities with a disgusted face. But in the middle, someone suddenly faced where Mio was, lifted both of its hands and began screaming.

But Mio who was concentrated in selecting seaweed, didn't notice that.

Several people look at the source, but Mio concentrated in her mouth. After they made noise is when Mio finally noticed. But it was already too slow.

"That is… what's going on? Ah, maybe you were curious after seeing me eat seaweed? Eh?!" (Mio)

An impact suddenly came from the back.

If it was a normal person, it would have certainly been a fatal attack. That's how strong the attack Mio received was.

Mio who had stood up from her squatting position with both hands filled with her harvest, had completely let her guard down. If she had spread out a "network" and

expanded her perception area it would have been a different story, but Mio isn't that skilled in the perception of her surroundings. Without any proper preparations, she received the attack and was blown away.

Mio was in the inner part of the beach at a place a bit faraway, attacked from behind while she was testing the seaweed.

A loud sound of water mixed with the noise of waves was raised.

That's right, Mio was completely thrown into the sea water.

The ingredients that she had carefully selected and were in her hands, were released because of the surprise attack. And were washed by the waves and disappeared into the open sea.

"…"

Mio stood up silently.

At her shoulder, there was a ferocious silver beast hanging onto her, biting her hard. With its hind legs it kicked Mio's body several times and from its moving jaw, one can see that the beast is still continuing to put in power. And yet, Mio didn't show any reaction.

From the sandy part of the beach, there was a shadow running to where Mio is, and it was reflected in her field of vision.

"… I have been drenched" (Mio)

A cold penetrating voice rang out.

The big wolf that would reach the ground if it stretched its legs, stopped its kicks. That's the identity of the beast that attacked Mio.

But that big and ferocious beast was scared by Mio's words and weakness became present in its eyes.

From its throat, an unreliable groan resounded.

"…"

Using her right hand, Mio casually grabs the silver wolf that was biting her left shoulder by the neck.

It was a show of strength that none would expect from a woman, but just like that she pulled the wolf that was at her shoulder and smashed it into the sea.

Mio's shoulders didn't have a single wound. It just left a small mark on the kimono she was wearing. The cloth resisted the attack of a wolf that was obviously not a normal beast. It was clear that it was not a simple kimono.

On the other hand, the wolf, just by being smashed into the ground, was so weak it couldn't even stand up properly. It was pushing its body up with its front legs, but its hind legs didn't do the same. It could only look at Mio while moaning weakly.

"Die, you bitch" (Mio)

Mio takes out the folding fan from her bosom and swings it closed.

Looking at the wolf with cold eyes that showed no mercy, she swings it in a breath.

It was literally a paper-thin difference.

The dark shadow enters into the space between Mio's attack and the wolf, and runs past while holding the wolf.

It must have been quite the desperate sprint. Without taking its distance from Mio, the shadow's posture crumbles.

"…"

Mio, with her dangerous chill still around her, stops her movements and looks at the intruder that was standing on its knees.

*Zuu Zuu

An unusual sound reverberates in the place. The intruder thinking what was that sound, concentrates on the source of the sound.

At the sea that preceded Mio's folding fan swing…

Without caring about that disturbance, the sea that was carrying the wave… suddenly split up.

The sea had divided in a range of several tens of meters from where Mio is and the bottom of the ocean was exposed.

It was only a phenomenon that lasted for a few seconds, but the intruder gulped its breath and stared at that

spectacle.

“The owner? Then accompany it” (Mio)

Mio swings her folding fang without hearing the answer of the intruder who had lost its words because of the previous phenomenon.

“I’m sorry!!”

The arm that was swung trembles, and stops. Because it lowered its head with all it had, when she thought it would stand up.

“…”

Maybe it piqued her interest. The hand of Mio stops and she waits for the next words of the intruder.

“When I went to check the beach, this little one suddenly attacked you and… It’s my fault. I understand that you are angered, but please, forgive us. The treatment of your injury and the mending of that kimono; I will definitely do it so!”

Mio slowly lowers her folding fan, and puts it back into her bosom. She forgave it, or more like, it was because this one has piqued her interest.

In this place where people don’t know the name of kimono, the black haired girl here had said it as if it were natural. The girl in question stares at the folding fan that was lowered, and looked like all her strength left her.

“… I am not injured so there’s no need for treatment. Also, mend my kimono? It’s is unfortunate, but this isn’t

something you can fix” (Mio)

It looked like she was a bit down because of the traces of fang in her kimono, but it wasn’t torn. Actually, the only damage-like damage was the washed away seaweed and that she was drenched.

“I-I am sorry”

“Let’s see, if you help me out and treat me to dinner, I can leave it as if it never happened” (Mio)

“If there’s anything I can do! Regarding the dinner, please let me treat you! Thank you very much! Uhm…”

“Mio-desu. And you lady?” (Mio)

“Hibiki. Mio-san, I am truly sorry. This child is also reflecting so…” (Hibiki)

At the place where she points out, there was the wolf curling its tail, but it was still sending a hostile gaze at Mio. It didn’t look like it was reflecting at all.

“Reflecting?” (Mio)

“Sorry! Horn, return!” (Hibiki)

The silver wolf is enveloped by light and disappears into the sash of Hibiki. Seeing that, Mio slightly narrows her eyes.

“That wolf is a spirit who lives in a tool?” (Mio)

“I don’t know in detail, but it’s something like a guardian beast” (Hibiki)

“… I see. Then Hibiki, could you please help me sort out the seaweed that is in good state?” (Mio)

“Seaweed? Uhm… is it for wakame or kelp? Mio-san is a cook?” (Hibiki)

Mio’s eyes widen at the nonchalant words of Hibiki. For Hibiki, her real reason to ask about her being a cook is because she actually wanted to continue by asking Mio what in the world is she. Of course, she doesn’t really think that Mio who easily split up the sea, to be a cook.

“?! That! Is there kelp among these?!” (Mio)

“Eh?! Ah, uhm, it’s probably the big one over there” (Hibiki)

“This one?! Or maybe this one?!” (Mio)

Just where in the world did her previous intensity go. She was now holding the said seaweeds in eachhand and looking at Hibiki with eyes that radiated a different kind of intensity.

“T-The one Mio-san is holding at yourright is probably… kelp I think….” (Hibiki)

“To think that not only was it not being sold, but dropped?!” (Mio)

Throwing away the one at her left, Mio holds the kelp (probably) at her right with both hands and looks at it seriously.

(Eh? Is she really a cook or something like that? I have heard that the wasteland before the town called Tsige

was a place where common sense didn't work but… is it that common sense won't work beginning from the outside part? She was uninjured after being attacked by Horn and was able to easily split the sea with a folding fan. For someone like that to be a cook…) (Hibiki)

Hibiki looks seriously at that Mio.

"Uhm, Mio-san. The one you threw is probably something called wakame and it is used in miso… I mean, as an ingredient which I think will go along well in soup" (Hibiki)

Just from the looks she wasn't sure, but Hibiki follows her explanation on the other one that was cruelly thrown away onto the beach. Immediately after that, Mio once again holds the wakame and washes it with sea water.

"Wakame! That's right, this was wakame! Ah, Hibiki-san! I thank Waka-sama for this encounter!" (Mio)

"Uwa!! Mio-san, just what is Waka-sama? Or more like, I'm sorry, it hurts, it stinks. Please let me go～～!!" (Hibiki)

In her left hand wakame, in her right kelp; holding both of them, Mio embraces Hibiki with quite the vigor and strength, without reserve.

Mio didn't notice at all, but this is how the Limia hero Otonashi Hibiki and Mio met.

Chapter 90: Gossip – Mio, Cooking And Hero (2)

“Then, Hibiki and the others were looking for weapons and were in the middle of heading to Tsige?”

“Yes. Our original plan was to use the gold highway and teleport until reaching Tsige, but we had some circumstances and have used ships and inconspicuous routes to transport until here”

In the highway with people, 5 persons were walking.

The sun is still high up and with the sparse number of people in this highway, one can tell that it isn’t used that often.

It’s the shortest route that connects Koran to Tsige. At both sides there are a number of mountains, forests, lakes. To fulfill requests and train their skills, the adventurers that live in Tsige head to those places.

It has been 2 days since Mio and Hibiki met.

Mio while still not knowing that Hibiki’s an otherworldler, she is being taught various knowledge about how to cook marine products by Hibiki. And Mio also visited numerous restaurants and passed her days eating things she has tasted for the first time. Right now she is accompanying Hibiki to her objective Tsige by Hibiki’s suggestion and so they are now walking along in the highway like this.

Hibiki has not revealed Mio her birthplace and that she is a hero. Hitting it off with Mio who wants to recreate

food, she talks about the knowledge she has of food in her previous world.

The group of the Limia hero is travelling incognito while vigilant of their surroundings just in case, but because of the death of one of their comrades, they are fatigued in spirit so noticing that the conversations with Mio were a good diversion, all except the person herself, silently consented Mio accompanying them.

“I am sorry to interrupt in the middle of your conversation but, can you please give me a bit of your time?”

When Mio and Hibiki had begun conversing about cooking, the magician who was silently walking, Wudi, cuts into the conversation. Because from the few days accompanying them, he knows that when the two of them begin talking about cooking, they don’t finish for a long time. He thought that it was better to first digest the things that must be asked and the questions they had. His decision was the correct one.

“What is it Wudi?” (Hibiki)

“Make it short. Today I want to ask about drop-lid simmering-desu kara” (Mio)

“Of course, Mio-dono. This may be a late question but, just what in the world are you? A cook, an adventurer or a merchant? Even though you did quite the shopping in Koran, you are not holding anything. You also didn’t have a carriage. I haven’t heard of a spell that one person can use to store that many goods” (Wudi)

Mio isn't that used to be called a cook. That also goes for being treated as a merchant and an adventurer. It's like when throws away the world and lives long years of retirement, like a rich daughter secluded in her room. She gave off this aura that she is not used to this world yet.

Even so, she is traveling alone like this and has travelled from Tsige to Koran and she is accompanying them on the way back. For Wudi there's something that doesn't fit. He had some bad feeling.

"… I am a person who is currently interested in cooking and I have registered as an adventurer. Also, I am part of a company. If you ask me what am I, that is my only answer" (Mio)

"… What a jumbled personal history. You say you are an adventurer but, you are not forming a party with anyone?"

It was Bredda. While he consented travelling together with Mio, he is cautious of her. He didn't go as far as thinking that the demon race has expanded their influence up to this point, but even so, as long as he is traveling while protecting the hero, his approach isn't wrong.

"Yeah, because the levels don't match or something like that. I actually wanted to party with Waka-sama, but since there's too much difference and because he is right now far away. The person who is closest to my level is someone called Tomoe-san who is in the same company as me, but it is not on the level where we can form a party so… Ah, that's right. I was originally a bodyguard

of Waka-sama, so I am probably a bodyguard as well" (Mio)

With no malice or anything of the like, Mio answers Bredda's question disinterested. Depending on the points of view, this could also be taken as feigning ignorance.

In truth, she really is not partying with anyone. The person she wants to party with, Makoto, is in level 1, and even the one who is the closest, Tomoe, is over level 1,300. Mio who is in level 1,500, isn't able to party with anyone, so it can't be helped.

"This may be rude but, what is the level of Mio-dono?"

"Sorry. Waka-sama has nailed onto me that I can't tell other people my level without a reason, so I can't answer. In exchange, I won't ask for your levels, so please do forgive me" (Mio)

"Hey, Wudi, and also Bredda! This is not an interrogation, so let's go with a more fun mood! We are doing a fast pace in the shortest route, but even so, she is still a person travelling with us!" (Hibiki)

Hating the fact that the mood was getting bad, Hibiki scolds her two companions.

The two of them apologize and obediently step back. It was not their intention to make the mood bad.

In the route from Tsige to Koran that Tomoe and Mio planned to advance through has a number of hyuman and demi-human settlements, a roundabout route that takes several days. In contrast, the one that the five of them are walking in right now is a slightly steep and

certainly the shortest route, where the adults could use magic to assist them to get through it in a single day. On top of not being able to pass with a carriage, there are chances to encounter mamonos, but if you are an adventurer, this route is a choice. Taking into account the girl Chiya who has a questionable amount of stamina, this route would take them at least 2 days to reach Tsige.

“Hibiki, thank you. By the way, this is something I thought after the talk of level, but Hibiki and the others are reasonably strong-desu yo ne?” (Mio)

“… Well, I think we are able to put good fight” (Hibiki)

Bredda holds in his growing anger and Hibiki answers Mio’s question. That reply had emotion mixed and the faces of Hibiki’s party get slightly clouded.

“I see… I normally don’t do this, but I am accompanying you guys while being cautious of the surroundings. And it seems that something unusual is heading towards us-desu. Is it fine to leave it to you guys? Or do you want me to help you?” (Mio)

“Don’t joke around. I don’t feel anything” (Wudi)

“Yeah, I also don’t feel anything around…” (Chiya)

Wudi and Chiya refuted Mio’s words. The two magicians had a hostile perception spell they were expanding in shifts. Saying something like that, Chiya who was resting, expands the spell again but in the effective range there was no reaction.

“It is being expanded a bit wide so I can see why. Ah, there wasn’t the need to try perceiving it. See, there it is”

(Mio)

Mio points out at the far mountain range.

“What… is that?”

“The wind is raging about?”

There, many trees were dancing in the sky. And the forest was visibly shaking.

The sound had not yet reached, but it was clear that something abnormal was occurring. And the abnormality was increasing its speed as it headed towards Hibiki and the others.

“Now do you understand-desu ka? And so, what will you do?” (Mio)

“Mio-san, do you know what that is?!” (Hibiki)

“You were able to perceive that… from this distance? Isn’t that impossible…” (Wudi)

“I am not really sure but… it is probably a bug type mamono that has mutated in the wasteland and has crossed the mountains. It happens from time to time-desu” (Mio)

Mio ignores Wudi and answers Hibiki’s question.

“A mamono from the wasteland?!”

Bredda was clearly agitated. Even though they were thinking about trying out the wasteland after preparing their equipment in Tsige, they didn’t expect that they would encounter a mamono before reaching the town.

In the time they were talking, from the forest, the mamono doesn't change its direction and continues charging at them.

It will soon come in contact with the perception spell of the hero party.

"This is?!"

"Incredibly strong! And also big!"

"What are we going to do Hibiki?!"

"… Mio-san. The thing that is heading here… is it stronger than the black calamity spider?" (Hibiki)

"Eh, spider?" (Mio)

"Yes, a hungry spider monster. Don't you know about it?" (Hibiki)

"I do know about it but… Well, if you ask me which one is stronger, I have to say the spider is stronger-desu ne. But, is there a need to compare them?" (Mio)

For Mio, the spider or in other words herself, hasn't fought anyone seriously until meeting Makoto. That is to say, what's the point of comparing strength when it wasn't even clear?

Even so, there's no doubt that if she compares herself before her pact (taking out the hunger) and fought with her original strength, there's no doubt she would win against that thing charging at them. That's why she answered Hibiki like that.

It isn't wrong. But the difference between the spider Mio is taking into account and the one Hibiki uses as measure, is what will make Hibiki do an incorrect decision.

"That means we are enough. Everyone, we will be fighting so, prepare!" (Hibiki)

Hibiki unsheathes her sword. Matching this, the other three prepare their fighting stances.

(Ara, they are really doing it? Even though it is clearly stronger. This people, are they the type who die an early death when entering the wasteland? That's troubling-wa ne. Well, if Hibiki seems to be in danger, I just have to save her so there no real problem-desu wa ne) (Mio)

"I see. Then I wish you good luck. If you think it gets bad, say so okay?" (Mio)

Practically at the same time as Mio says so, a strong wind is raised in the surroundings. She jumps gently and sits down on a tree branch a bit faraway while resting her chin on one hand.

There, something that had 4 legs extending from its abdomen, supporting its body and from its upper half there were two giant characteristic scythes in the place of its arms.

"A praying… mantis?" (Hibiki)

That's right. Just like how Hibiki said, there was a giant monster there which was probably based on a praying mantis. Its height is over 3 meters.

Without even a single instant…

It did an action that clearly told that the objective of the praying mantis was not the hero party. It does a swipe with its giant scythes that scatters the obstacles and heads onto the hero party.

(Ara)

Seeing the horizontal swipe of those scythes that cut off the surrounding leafs in an instant, Mio notices something.

(I see. It's a variation that was weakened and got possessed by a wind spirit. From its size, it most likely ate a lot after that. And so, because it was troubled by food, it crossed the mountains. It would normally be a case where an emergency request is made in Tsige and gets noisy) (Mio)

Mio is in a place outside the range of its attack and observes the praying mantis calmly.

She has done requests in the wasteland and has experience protecting adventurers she accompanies so she knows how to act in this situations.

Honestly speaking, taking into account the boost that Tsige has received because of Tomoe and Mio, Hibiki's group is about third place in Mio's eyes. She doesn't know about their level, but considering their survival abilities and instant decision making, they are just one of those parties that has some skills and has somehow not been buried.

"Bredda!" (Hibiki)

“Roger!” (Bredda)

With Hibiki’s voice, Bredda takes a step forward and stops the scythe attack with a wide width sword and deviates it.

(Heh～, it is quite the well done defense. But well I have seen their weapons and I have to say, they have quite the poor equipment… Eh?!) (Mio)

Mio’s surprise.

That reason was Bredda. Mio instantly understood that his sword was already not in a state where it could be used properly, but maybe because Bredda still didn’t understand that, he was preparing himself to receive the other incoming scythe with his sword.

Moreover, it looked like he didn’t notice the difference in nature of the attack at all.

Seeing how low their observation ability is, Mio clicks her tongue. It seems like she was overestimating Hibiki and the others and has been left disappointed.

“Idiot! Evade it!” (Mio)

Without any other choice, Mio warns him.

“Eh?”

From Bredda’s look, it seems like he didn’t take heed of Mio’s words. The reason he let those words slip was because Hibiki was aiming for a counter.

Flash.

Bredda takes on the second attack of the praying mantis.

But the result will not be the same as last time.

The right scythe had passed through.

Bredda's sword gets torn in two and without stopping, it cut through his left shoulder that was protected by metal like it was paper.

The heavy armor young man coughs fresh blood and falls face up.

His eyes were not filled with despair, but surprise. How pitiful that sight was.

But he is still not dead. The healing light of Chiya who is in charge of recovery envelops Bredda. Wudi's aria doesn't stop and the battle is just begin, or at least that's how it was supposed to go.

"Bredda!! No… M-Mio-san, I am sorry but please!" (Hibiki)

Just like that.

Unrest runs through Wudi and Chiya.

Mio also gets surprised by the unexpected words. It's true that Bredda suffered severe injuries, but he is still able to continue fighting. Or more like, if he doesn't get up somehow, it is certain that everyone will die.

For her to change her thinking to running because of this, is way too fast.

Of course, there is no way for Mio to know this, but it

was because Naval's death had become a heavy trauma in Hibiki. Outside it looks like she had already gotten over it, but in reality it was far from that.

Actually, the slight escapism of Hibiki to her previous world had something to do with the cooking discussion she had with Mio.

The normal Hibiki, after seeing the ability of Mio in the beach, she would have answered her questions while asking her to have a bout with her. And yet, she answered all of Mio's questions and just conversed about cooking. Because of the peaceful conversations, she must have unconsciously felt peace of mind.

For the mamono, the people's circumstances are totally not its business.

Mio, while thinking about the unexpected request of reinforcement this early, moves at high speed to the vicinity of where Bredda is fallen.

"Hibiki, you have disappointed me. How pathetic. If you are weak, understand that you are weak and evade the danger. It's a bother-desu. Those two over there, I leave the treatment of that knight to you" (Mio)

Hibiki's shoulders make a big tremble.

"Geez. For a mere insect to think he is allowed to devastate the forest. How will you compensate if with this the number of mushrooms and fruits lower?" (Mio)

Beating its fang and making an obnoxious sound, the mamono didn't show any signs of answering Mio's question.

She stopped the swung scythe with her folding fan, no, not only that, she repelled it.

“Wa!”

“Eh?!”

“Die” (Mio)

She swipes her folding fan horizontally. She didn’t even pay attention to whose voice it was.

Mio easily cuts the praying mantis in two along with the forest behind it.

The mamono that had the upper half imitating that of a hyuman and the lower that was of an insect had separated.

“Done. With this you can even get raw materials from it right?” (Mio)

“…”

To not have words must refer to this kind of situations. That praying mantis was without doubt a strong one with clear presence and she defeated it like if she were taking care of a hoodlum in the road.

Even though she hasn’t sweated at all in the battle, Mio fans her face with her opened folding fan.

“Is the knight fine?” (Mio)

“Ah, ehm, yes. I think we will somehow be able to close the wound”

“I see. Then there won’t be any need to assist right? Hibiki, help in dismantling” (Mio)

“Mio-san!!” (Hibiki)

The distressed words of Hibiki didn’t reach in time.

Without any time to turn back, Mio’s back was slashed.

Losing her posture, Mio steps forward several times. There was no scream.

Flapping its wings at a speed that eyes couldn’t catch properly, it made its body hover.

“Mio…san?” (Hibiki)

“… Hey, Hibiki” (Mio)

The tone that was being directed at Hibiki was clearly low. Remotely different compared to the time at the beach.

If Makoto saw this he would raise his hands in surrender. That’s how dangerous the current anger of Mio is.

The praying mantis that had its body bisected, had gone mad and continued to slash at Mio’s back. But Mio was showing no signs of being affected. Of course, there was no blood and unlike the viciousness of the attacks, it was quite peaceful.

“Is my kimono loosening?” (Mio)

“… Uhm”

“It’s ragged, Mio-oneechan”

“… I see” (Mio)

Taking the place of Hibiki who was having troubles saying it, Chiya explains her the situation. Mio puts her folding fan in her bosom. She breathed deeply and exhales.

And then she turns and faces the praying mantis. There, a domain of two giant scythes were raging.

And yet…

Mio thrusts both of her arms without hesitation.

“You… inseeect!!” (Mio)

Grabbing the left scythe with one hand, she ties its other scythe whole with the darkness that was gushing out of her right palm.

Thinking that the darkness had gone into the praying mantis’ arm, the arm that was wrapped up in tight muscles had been instantly sliced into thousand pieces and fallen to the ground. Hibiki and the others gulp their breaths. The mamono makes a painful shriek.

But Mio doesn’t stop at just that.

With her open right hand, she firmly grabs the remaining scythe that was grabbed with her left.

And then, with Chiya’s scream in the background…

She cuts it into thousand pieces.

With the slender arms of a girl.

She does that to a mamono that is praised for its strong build.

To the prided arm that had a scythe.

Once again, an inhuman shriek reverberates around the surroundings.

Losing its lower body and its two arms…

The mamono had already noticed its own demise. But even so, it still tried to cling to life and with its flying ability that was still left, it tried to escape from the fight.

However, even that was not possible.

Mio's right hand was still holding the mamono's arm. Its left arm's scythe was cut in thousand pieces and thrown away, but her right hand was still holding its arm.

Increasing the strength of its flapping, the praying mantis that had already lost its original form, created a gale while trying to escape.

"Shut up!" (Mio)

The giant body is send flying in the air in a form that it didn't wish to. Mio had raised it with one hand. And just like that, she smashed it to the ground. The ground that had received the body of the mamono, showed a fissure.

"How dare you do that to the kimono Waka-sama praised!!" (Mio)

The lower body that was lying powerless and the upper body that was being smashed, were wrapped by darkness

at the same time.

Even though it was darkness created by magic, a part of it makes you think it's a living being. The wriggling darkness begins to expand and envelops that giant body, and after that, it slowly gets smaller.

In time, the darkness disappears in midair. There was nothing left.

"… Ah… Because I continue letting my guard down. Can the kimono be fixed?" (Mio)

Changing into a troubled face that one would even think it's not the same person, Mio looks at the state of her back. However, Hibiki and the others had no words, and were only overwhelmed by the being that was on a whole different level.

"No good. As expected, this is not the time to be leisurely returning" (Mio)

Mio seems to be pondering about something.

(Mu, thought transmission? Is she talking to someone?)

Wudi who had left Bredda's treatment to Chiya, goes to where Hibiki is and while confirming her state, he notices that Mio's pondering look was because she was talking to someone and he had taken an interest in it.

In time, Mio faces in the direction of the three.

"I have decided to hurry and return to Tsige. I can't just leave you behind so, please do forgive me" (Mio)

Darkness envelops the three.

A sound of powerless falling reverberates.

Mio who had taken away the consciousness of Hibiki and the others, confirms their state and once again connects the thought transmission.

(Tomoe, I have taken down everyone. I am counting on you to get us to Tsige-desu wa) (Mio)

(I am not a taxi-ja ga na) (Tomoe)

(Taxi? A word I still don't know of huh. Didn't I tell you that this has to do with my learning of Japanese food?) (Mio)

(Ah, that you did-ja na. Well, if it's about that, I will cooperate. Is the gate of Tsige fine?) (Tomoe)

(Yeah) (Mio)

In the place where an intense fight had taken place, a number of presences disappeared.

Chapter 91: Gossip – Mio, Cooking And Hero (3)

“Ara, you came”

At the interior of the counter, in a place where there is a workshop, a familiar voice is heard. Hibiki and the others notice that they have arrived to their objective.

They are at Tsige which is showing the most growth in this remote region, and moreover, in the Rembrandt Company that is riding on the momentum and growing with it. They are at a corner.

A darkish skin demi-human smiled at them gently from the counter and received them.

It’s the sub-branch of Kuzunoha Company in Tsige.

This company has already obtained a deep amount of stable customers and among the adventurers it is a store they admire.

It uses outstanding materials and in this town it is the place with the highest quality of equipment. Moreover, if one has the right amount of money, they even accept orders for improvements or original weapon creations. For equipment that will certainly last for a long time, not only the adventurers but the people who have occupations where they will encounter battles, rate this place highly.

Even so, there are a number of merchants at a corner lining up to buy medicine. Kuzunoha Company’s medications are famous for being more effective than

those other unskillful magic medications and their sales are rising. There's no doubt that it is doing well as a company.

Right now the armor orders are temporarily stopped, so in the place for armor orders, there's no one. However, a number of adventurer-looking hyumans were there looking at the situation from the distance, so some people were anticipating that the orders will begin again.

Hibiki and her companions were transported to an inn in Tsige by Mio while they were unconscious. Mio gave detailed instructions to the landlady and left the inn. Hibiki's group heard the situation from the landlady (several parts were altered) and devoted themselves to Bredda who was heavily injured, living several days there.

And so, today.

Because Bredda was able to walk normally now, they once again reunited and headed to Kuzunoha Company's sub-branch where they were told they could contact Mio.

Hibiki's group didn't know about the gazes of inquisitiveness and envy that were being directed at them. It's because they were envious of them having connections with Mio, but Hibiki's group who don't know about Kuzunoha Company and the status of Mio in this town, it is no surprise that they haven't noticed.

When the Forest Oni clerk said "Sorry for making you wait", a black haired girl they met a few days ago appeared.

“That knight, it seems he has healed already-desu ne. It’s great that it was nothing serious” (Mio)

“Yeah… That time you really aided us. From what I heard, you even lend a hand in healing. We thank you” (Bredda)

Bredda himself steps forward and thanks Mio. Mio glances at him and soon turns her gaze to Hibiki.

“I don’t mind-desu wa. I am used to protecting after all. And so Hibiki, it seems that your companion is in a good state but, do you have time?” (Mio)

“Yes. I heard from the landlady that you had business with me. So uhm… Is it about the fight with the mamono?” (Hibiki)

Hibiki’s expression is gloomy. Showing a pathetic appearance and being told that she was disappointed, had become a lingering discomfort inside her. For her, there were no past experiences where she has disappointed anyone and no experience in confronting her own weakness.

Coupled with the fight of the demon general that made her hold doubts about her strength, she who is a hero, hadn’t been able to digest this feeling inside her yet.

“Fight? Ah, I don’t really mind that. I just said this but, because of reasons, I am used to protecting people like you. Just think of it as being lucky-desu wa” (Mio)

However, Mio’s words totally negated Hibiki’s thoughts. From Mio’s point of view, the way back to Tsige had turned into protecting hyumans, that’s all.

“We were lucky…?” (Hibiki)

“Yeah, because you guys didn’t die. Moreover, I am not your companion nor your teacher and yet, why do I have to grade your fight and scold you?” (Mio)

Mio’s words implied that she didn’t care much about the life of Hibiki’s group. Those words stabbed Hibiki’s group.

“That is… then why did you save us?” (Hibiki)

“I told this to the landlady too but, Hibiki, it’s because I had business with you-desu. I still haven’t asked you about how to make Dashi from the marine products and dried fish after all” (Mio)

“D-Dashi is it?” (Hibiki)

“Yes” (Mio)

“Just because of that?” (Hibiki)

“? That’s right. If you know about ways to cook, it would be a pity to have you die. Just that. Now Hibiki, you have already taken care of your worries, so please give me some of your time” (Mio)

Without any concern, Mio just answers the words of the dazed Hibiki.

“Mio-dono, we are grateful for saving us, but we are unable to agree to your request. The reason we came here is to train and get good equipment. Sadly, we don’t have time to spare…” (Wudi)

Wudi opposes Mio's proposal. Hibiki's group came to Tsige because they were looking for an outstanding place to train. And also to find equipment that matches their skills. For the sake of the rematch with the demon general and also to overcome Stella Fort this time for certain. All of these actions are for that sake.

"Stop it. To be defeated by an enemy of that level and moreover for a party that has the decision making of a baby, stepping into the wasteland will just turn you into feed. Your levels may be high, but in that place that just makes you a child with big build. It's impossible-desu" (Mio)

Mio rejects Wudi's speech as if amazed. It wasn't that she belittled them or scorned them. It was like she was really admonishing a kid.

"Even so! We have to get stronger! We don't have the time!" (Hibiki)

Mio sighs at Hibiki's intense words. Because she saw in her eyes the light of an adventurer hurrying to its death place, the characteristic eyes of a person with narrowed vision.

"I don't understand. I thought you were adventurers who were a bit different, but do you have an objective that makes you hurry that much?" (Mio)

"That is…"

"But I want you to at least repay me for saving your life? Also, no matter how strong you are, do you intent to take such a small child to the wasteland?" (Mio)

“…”

“Silent-desu ka. To think you guys were more stupid than I thought. Hmph, even so, this is troubling. I also can’t back off after all…” (Mio)

“Mio-san, for a while we will be moving in the day. So how about I tag along with Mio-san at night?” (Hibiki)

“From how you said it, it feels like there might not even be that many days-desu wa ne. I see, what should I do…?” (Mio) <Hinting that they will die in a few days if they continue>

Hibiki and Mio converse across the counter.

There, one man cuts in. It’s a man that just like Mio, came from the interior of the store.

“Then, how about this?”

“N, Beren. Do you have an ingenious idea?” (Mio)

“It’s not to the point of calling it ingenious though. Mio-sama wants to ask about cooking to that lady there right? And if possible, learn the techniques as well” (Beren)

“Yeah” (Mio)

“And so, the group says they want to get stronger at the wasteland” (Beren)

“Yes. That’s the reason why we came” (Hibiki)

Aside from Hibiki who answered, the others also assent.

“I see, just like how Mio-sama said, if it continues like

this, you guys will die in given time. Practically certain" (Beren)

"!!"

"Beren, don't beat around the bush and just say it!" (Mio)

"Sorry for the discourtesy. If you are going to teach Mio-sama cooking, in regards of teaching her, I will also provide everyone with equipment that fits you in deferred payment. You can leave to the wasteland at that time. That way, until the equipment is done… let's see, three days maybe. In that time it will be done. After that, you will continue teaching Mio-sama cooking at night. What do you think? Excuse me for my impoliteness, it is true that everyone's equipment is reasonably good, but they seem to be quite damaged. To go to the wasteland like that is suicide" (Beren)

"… Can we be at peace by just changing the equipment?" (Mio)

"Then, how about having Toa and the others accompany them as well? If it's Mio-sama's request, they won't refuse" (Beren)

"I see. If it's them, as long as it is in the day there's not much to worry. Beren, wasn't it an ingenious idea after all?" (Mio)

"I am honored. And so, how about it?" (Beren)

The opinions of the people inside the counter had been arranged and the dwarf craftsman asks for the answer of Hibiki's group.

“Three days huh. You can’t shorten that time?” (Bredda)
＜If I were a blacksmith, I would have stabbed him in the throat for that one＞

“I will be taking the measurements now so. It is a different story from just repairing. Three days is an incredibly short time that no matter what craftsmen you ask would concur” (Beren)

To Bredda’s question, the craftsman Beren answers politely. Inside him, he was amazed by the knight who didn’t understand smithing.

“What prove do we have that the accompanying adventurers can be trusted?” (Wudi)

It’s the magician Wudi. He was worried whether the people accompanying can be trusted. To have the adventurers you hired betray you, isn’t that unusual of a story. If a betrayal occurs in a dangerous place, it can even kill them all.

“Toa-dono is the person at the top of Tsige’s list. Her face is known and she is not the kind of person who would do unreasonable things. Her party’s average level is over 450 and its ability can soon be called high class” (Beren)

“450?!”

“Also, they are adventurers Mio-sama trusts. If you say there’s no way you can trust them, then at that time we would have to think of another way” (Beren)

“?!”

Wudi trembles at the gaze mixed with blood thirst that

Beren released for a second. He felt like he wouldn't hesitate to take unscrupulous means. To feel danger from a conversation about cooking is just unreasonable.

With a nod that one could take as consent, Wudi steps back.

"Hibiki, what will you do? I do think this proposal is advantageous for your party though?" (Beren)

"… I count on you" (Hibiki)

"Great! Then let's begin the measuring as soon as possible. Beren, hurry. The first one will be Hibiki okay? After that, contact Toa and…" (Mio)

"Everyone, over here please" (Beren)

Being invited by Mio and Beren, Hibiki's group disappears into the interior of the store.

Limia's Hero began her restart in the borderland.

◇◆◇◆◇◆◇◆

This is the first time in Hibiki's life that several months felt so short.

Now it feels nostalgic the times when they were surprised by the performance of the weapons Beren and the other elder dwarfs created.

From the adventurer party of the girl Toa they were presented to, they have learned the adventurer way of decision making and way of thinking. Toa who was filling the role as party leader, is the type who uses speed

as weapon and while it is the same type as Hibiki, she uses a different method to take advantage of the enemy's openings, and she was able to become a good sparring partner for Hibiki. Toa who thought of Hibiki as a person of her same trade, didn't find the chance to show Hibiki her trump card and hidden skills. No one knows what the result would be if a real fight were to happen. At least Hibiki thinks that she doesn't want to confront her.

Lately, Hibiki has not been increasing her level, however, her strength has clearly increased.

At first, Hibiki who was still dragging her trauma of losing her companion, splendidly lost in a spar with Toa who was close to her level. She already has experience, but this is the first time that Hibiki has lost to a hyuman so badly. By the way, she also sparred with Mio, but the result was a complete defeat. She practically didn't let her do anything.

One time, late at night in the inn where she had expanded a barrier in case of intruders and was sleeping, there was a case when Mio had, not broken the barrier, but passed through it and woke her up. Hibiki who was struggling because she didn't know what was happening, got easily subjugated and was dragged to the kitchen by Mio who had sparkling eyes, to teach her cooking.

There was a time when Hibiki who was particularly stuck to the idea of levels, didn't understand why she lost to Toa who has a lower level than her, and had to ask.

"When I was in Zenno, I was like that. Well, aren't levels just one of many indicators?" (Toa)

Is what Toa thought as she remembered the masked merchant.

“Having a high level is just proof that you have killed a lot. You shouldn’t feel strength from a number but with your body” (Mio)

This was said by Mio. It was slightly mixed with the masochism when she was controlled by hunger, but Hibiki didn’t notice it. She was only looking at Mio with admiration.

And that Mio who was being taught by Hibiki the way to make Dashi from dried fish and konbu, had the sparkling eyes of a child.

A companion that has the same black hair as her, and even if it’s only limited to cooking, she is able to talk to her about the knowledge of her previous world in a favorable light. As Hibiki was steadily conquering her trauma, she was at the same time growing dependent of Mio.

—

Tonight will be the last night her party will be staying in Tsige.

A repatriation order had been send by Limia.

At first, because they were being treated favorably by the dwarfs, Hibiki’s party were a target of envy, but being friends with Toa’s party and the mutual cooperation in the wasteland, and at the same time as Hibiki conquered her trauma, she slowly regained her disposition of attracting spirits and were slowly being accepted by the

adventurers in this remote region.

That's why tonight, a party was being held for the sake of her and her party, and a great number of adventurers were sad at their parting as they make a racket. There were some who decided to follow Hibiki's party to Limia and there were others who had decided to fight alongside her.

Bredda and Wudi were dead drunk and in that state, they disappeared somewhere. Maybe they were kidnapped by women who were sad by their departure and wanted to pass a night of passion with them.

Chiya didn't have adventurers who were the same age as her and felt left out, so she had a time when she was homesick, but because she hit it off with Toa's sister Rinon, she was having fun in this party as she drank juice and in the end, the two of them happily went to sleep on the same bed.

And Hibiki…

Had left the tumult and was on top of the rampart that surrounds the town. It couldn't compare to the modern sight of neon, but at her back there's the lighted town of Tsige. At her front, there's the gold highway. The place where the wealthy merchant Rembrandt and his butler saw off Misumi Makoto, is exactly this place.

She is not alone.

From the inner part leaning at the rampart, there is a woman looking at Hibiki. It's Mio.

"I heard you have something to talk about? Is it

something that you have to ask me to come all the way here for-desu no?" (Mio)

"… Yes. In that place where a party is being held, I just felt like the mood was not right" (Hibiki)

Hibiki who was looking at the highway, turns around.

"Make it short. Being in this kind of place at midnight can create unnecessary misunderstandings" (Mio)

"As always, when it isn't related to cooking you are so cold, Mio-san. Understood, I have two things I want to convey" (Hibiki)

"…"

"First, Mio-san thank you very much" (Hibiki)

Hibiki lowers her head deeply and gives her thanks.

"If we didn't meet Mio at Koran, I think we wouldn't be alive. The wasteland was a lot harsher than we thought. The trigger was Horn running wild, but I am really glad that I met you Mio-san" (Hibiki)

"I also had an objective after all. There's no need to thank me" (Mio)

(Also, the reason why that wolf called Horn attacked me was because he reacted to my smell. Through the end it seems these guys didn't realize that I am the black spider they fought, but only that thing noticed it. There's no helping it that he attacked me. Also, I have already "silenced" Horn, so there's no need for me to tell her) (Mio)

Mio found out the reason the silver wolf attacked her. On top of that, she gave detailed instructions to Horn and had him unable to disclose anything to Hibiki and the others. Thinking about the conditions, that wolf wouldn't disclose anything, is what Mio thought with peace of mind.

"I was surprised that you even had katanas, but the sword that Beren-san made is really incredible. Our meeting with him is also thanks to Mio, so please accept my thanks" (Hibiki)

Hibiki had her heart quite moved when she saw the katana at the elder dwarfs' workshop. It is also because she originally practiced kendo. When she took it in her hands and unsheated it, she was dazzled by that beauty and gulped her breath.

But, Beren bluntly told Hibiki that she is not fit for a katana and cut off her longing eyes.

Beren who had seen her sword, had warned her that Hibiki's sword technique didn't fit katanas anymore.

"I can tell that the skills that lie in young lady's body are originally techniques that handle single edged swords. However, the sword that young lady is swinging right now is clearly double-edged sword techniques. I don't recommend the katana which also has a special method of maintenance. That's my opinion as a person who recommends weapons" (Beren)

There was no mistake.

The way of using a sword that Hibiki had originally

known was kendo and a bit of fencing. Apart from kendo which she continued in club activities, she also learned a bit of fencing, but because of reasons, she soon had to stop.

And so, when she came to this world, she had now settled with the real combat sword techniques of the now deceased Naval that are mixed with self-taught techniques as well as the way of fighting with the bastard sword. To use a katana now might be difficult, she herself knows that.

Accepting the warning obediently, Hibiki for the first time obtained a weapon that surpassed her abilities. Contrary to how it has been in the past, she had to train to be able to properly pull out the capabilities of the weapon. That sword which was mixed in with Beren's playful side, is a sword that's bigger than a bastard sword and its appearance is one that can compare to a big sword, but it was unexpectedly lighter than the sword Hibiki used.

If she accurately took into consideration its size, she is able to use it just like her previous sword. That Beren used the scythe Mio showed him nonchalantly as material is one of the secrets that have not been revealed to Hibiki.

Remembering that gratitude as well, Hibiki turns her gaze away from Mio and looks at the night sky.

"I think right now I am only able to bring out about half of the capabilities of this sword. Beren-san also said I still haven't been able to bring out the trick to it and was disappointed. To leave before finishing a task, is honestly

mortifying” (Hibiki)

“Not really. The current you can get proper training even without staying here. You probably will be able to use Beren’s creation in a near future” (Mio)

“I will do my best. And so, about the other thing I want to convey” (Hibiki)

Hibiki, unusual from her, was showing a look like she is having a hard time choosing her words. Having drunk and eaten enough and not having any urgent business, Mio just waits silently for Hibiki’s words.

“… Mio-san, could you please come together with us? In the end I wasn’t able to meet him, but I will definitely make sure not to show discourtesy to the company’s representative!” (Hibiki)

Hibiki has not met the Kuzunoha Company’s representative, Raidou. It is someone that comes in conversations at times and she has also heard stories from Toa. That mysterious merchant who seems to have skill, in the end didn’t return from stocking up and Hibiki and none of her companions have met him.

It’s just that it was clear that Mio, Beren and the people in the company admire him a lot and when they told Hibiki about Raidou, they showed extraordinary pride.

“I don’t want to-desu. I have Waka-sama after all. I told Hibiki too right?” (Mio)

Immediate answer.

“Then together with that Waka-sama. I will also prepare

it so he can make a store there” (Hibiki)

“That’s also a no-desu. Didn’t I tell you that Waka-sama is currently busy?” (Mio)

There were no points where Hibiki could find compromise.

“… This is just an example but, if my wish concerned the world and you pulling back drags Mio-san’s important Waka-sama, and turns into a situation where your strength is necessary to cope with. Would you still say that?” (Hibiki)

I am a hero, through the end, Hibiki didn’t tell Mio. She deceived her by randomly telling her that her knowledge of cooking was learned from reading books. Of course, it is a lie that just by asking would soon crumble. But for Mio, the important part was the cooking knowledge and techniques and anything else was irrelevant.

It’s also because she was uneasy about revealing her position of hero to Toa and Mio, and changing their way of treating her. Being able to stay as a simple adventurer, this several months were fresh, and are really regretful times to part from.

“Not even worth discussing. I don’t care about the world at all-desu. What’s important is Waka-sama only. If it turns into a situation where a mere woman like me has to provide reinforcement to resolve, it means that Waka-sama can deal with it as well. Then I just need to stay at that grand person’s side, and put my life for him” (Mio)

“… No matter what?” (Hibiki)

“No matter what-desu wa” (Mio)

Hibiki thought about just revealing that she is a hero once and for all, but she soon threw away that thinking. Mio said she doesn’t care about the world. Then, even if she reveals that she is a hero that has been called to protect the hyuman society, it wouldn’t affect the negotiation.

(Just who in the world is this Waka-sama that Mio-san is so in love with? Toa-san also said that he is on a whole different level and made a wry smile after all. Could it be that guy and Mio’s group could even save the world?) (Hibiki)

The comment Hibiki thought jokingly might not be that much of a stupid one, is what she will think back in given time.

“… Fuh~. No matter what huh. I have been splendidly rejected” (Hibiki)

“If you are a person with the role of managing a party, you must know that having it easy and being comfortable is a minus. I don’t intend to follow the orders of anyone aside from Waka-sama” (Mio)

“Yes yes, thanks for all the sugar. This is all I wanted to convey. Then Mio-san, with this…” (Hibiki)

“Yeah, take care when returning” (Mio)

“Yes. Mio-san, please visit Limia when you have the chance. At that time I will remember more recipes” (Hibiki)

“Ara, this is the first appealing proposal you have made. I will keep it in mind” (Mio)

For the end, Hibiki did a deep bow and leaves.

That’s how the strange meeting of Mio and Hibiki had ended.

Chapter 92: Makoto's Worries And Unexpected Rumors

The company is going well.

I think it is stupid that I didn't think about it, but after opening there have been conspicuous resales and things like buying all the goods. It isn't perfect, but I made some counter-measures.

Specifically speaking, things like limits on how many goods one can buy and "requests" for the people that want to resale.

It isn't something that I can completely stop anyways, so giving up somewhat, I made a plan to the extent I can. Because doing the same thing repeatedly and going stale is just unproductive.

The lectures too… One might say, they are going well.

Since then, the students that were introduced by Brait-sensei some of them remained, and those that remained introduced the class to other students, so we succeeded in securing a fair amount of students.

… That only 5 people remained, well, it's probably good like that. Having too many just makes it troublesome, yeah.

The 5 people are all scholarship students and have the nature of craving for power. Seeing it from a normal student perspective, my lectures didn't fit their taste, but the highest percentage felt danger from it. It was probably not a very desirable lecture.

For the time being I am still accepting students, but I am not really expecting much. As for the students that remained I will do some light “experiments” without permission on a level where their health is not affected, and while at that, have them take the lectures.

Because I use a weakening [Sakai] in the practical skill area the whole lecture, it looks flashy but since it is not on a dangerous level, the academy side decided it was okay. Just as planned. What I was worried about was that the effect should weaken depending on the scope of the effect, but lately, maybe because I am getting used to it, the effect seems to have increased. <Looks flashy probably means the state of the people, not the Sakai itself>

Currently, there haven’t been any interference from the teacher faction and it has been peaceful.

In short, the livelihood in Academy Town is going favorably.

And yet…

In the library I have been going to as a habit after my lectures, I find a book I am looking for and sit on a desk that’s slightly to the front of it, and just like that I fall prostrated.

A long sigh leaks from my mouth.

Right now, I am being cornered in a sense.

“To think that in this world the hyumans practiced polygamy” (Makoto)

A sacred system that was established by God, or so it seems. Yeah, God.

A monologue comes out from my mouth. Maybe because no one understands me, I feel like my monologues after coming to the Academy have increased. I don't want them to look at me with strange eyes so I am trying to not do it that much though.

But, to think they practice polygamy. That bug, she really gets me every time. That total idiot.

It looks like a system convenient for men, but it is actually not the case. In my lack of imagination, I thought of the polygamy system as something like a harem. I was really naïve.

After looking at the hyuman society I have finally noticed.

This is not something like having as many wives you want and going "uhauha", rather, it is more like the qualitative difference between modern Japan gets even worse.

People that have the most beauty and riches, in other words, the women gather onto the superior men and it isn't like everyone can have a harem.

On the contrary, it increases the chances of males that can't marry. Goddess, just how many terrible things do you have to do in order to be satisfied? There's no need to screen them out that much.

Polygamy system is actually a really dream-like system for the majority of males.

Even so, it makes the chances of me marrying even lower, or not.

… It's the opposite.

It has been several months since I come to this Academy but, maybe it was 2 weeks ago?

That I was confessed to.

For someone like Shiki, from the first day there were numerous girls that wanted to go out with him, but I just laughed as if someone else's business and didn't envy, nor soothe, or hear his complains.

At the time when my company had rode on the tracks and the Academy had somewhat approved of my abilities; well it is something recent though.

It began with a call that said a student had something to consult. It was a girl I have never seen in my lectures. In short, a student I have never met before.

"Is sensei already married?"

That was the beginning of my nightmare.

[I'm single. What about it?]

Of course, that's how I responded.

I don't know how it turned this way, but after that, the girl said this:

"Then after the third one, could you please marry me?"

The inside of my brain… became a complete mess. In my

previous world, when I was confessed to by my kohai and my club friend, I didn't feel anything like tension or excitement.

I was just dumbfounded. Because, even if a person I first met suddenly asks me to marry her, my feelings are zero. Also she said something about numbers. At that time, I didn't understand the meaning.

To the female student that said something absurd with an unexpected serious face, I breathe out a sigh, knowing that it was rude.

[I am sorry, but I don't have any intentions to]

I was somehow able to write that and left the place.

The next confession was that day at evening. No, instead of confession it was like the first one, a proposal.

And so, in the store, outside, inside the Academy; without caring about the place, they called me and if it gets bad they make a marriage proposal right there.

Moreover, there's always the "please make me your wife number X". However, in the X number, it is always a number that's not number 1. They were mostly 3 to 5.

Polygamy. Really the worst.

I have a business and have a decent amount of money as well as having fair amount of ability. Then they ignore my face and just suggest to be the number 2 wife and on to gold dig. That's probably how it goes. Just their objective of having me support them is cruel and yet, it feels like they might even bring out something like

rebuilding their home and have all of my money taken. There were girls who had some transparent ulterior motive like that.

Leaving the love and raising the child to the number 1 or 2, they aim to do nothing at all.

In truth, that's just how it is.

There was once when a girl who had an appearance that was truly to my taste came wearing a white robe and, I couldn't tell if she was demanding research expenses or proposing marriage, but when she did, I said jokingly:

[If you become my number 1, I will marry and give you as much money as you want]

And when I said that, not only did she show me an expression of incredible disgust, she also said:

"No thanks!"

As if her life was at stake, and ran away as fast as she could.

I have been confessed as if looking down on me several times, but that one really got me.

… Really, I give up. It isn't popularity, I am just being locked on as prey. It was a lot easier when they just didn't treat me like a human being. The way they are now makes it hard for my spirit.

In the library there haven't been those kind of developments, but it is just a matter of time.

Now that I think about it, why is it that the library is a safe zone?

Do they have some sort of rule? Or is someone keeping them in check? No matter which, I am grateful.

I raise my head and hold the book in my hands. Now then, let's study today as well.

Today I don't need to go to the store. At first I was doing business with no breaks, but most of the stores normally have a 1 or 2 days break. We even work till late, so thinking that it would be okay to have regular holidays, I made it so in a day when I have lectures it will be a free day.

The small one of the Forest Onis said "Gloria～～!!" and raised her hands in the sky. That girl is someone I still don't understand well.

"Ara, today is a book about religion? Raidou-sensei really reads books of many different types. Magic, combat, history, geography, customs, also demi-humans… The ones I haven't seen you reading are probably tales, math and biography"

[Eva-san huh. If you suddenly talk to me like that, it will scare me. Also, do you remember every book someone like me reads?]

"Yeah. I am interested in Raidou-sensei after all" (Eva)

The librarian Eva-san smiles teasingly.

[Please give me a break. You won't be coming to ask me for marriage as well right?]

“… Ah, so the reason of your fatigue was that. Superficial love. It seems like there are many girls that want to marry. I sympathize with you sensei” (Eva)

[Right now this is the only place in the Academy that can bring me peace. Concerned about my appearance and after my popularity increased they now want to suck on the sweet nectar. Geez, just what do they take marriage for?]

“Well, here the number of students that are nobles or have a big mercantile house is not small, so there are a lot of students that don’t think of marriage as mutual love” (Eva)

Changing her smile to a wry one, Eva-san answers to my resent. Maybe she has experience herself, Evan-san doesn’t answer in an intellectual way, but in a way that feels like she has some basis. I like when it is easy to understand.

[Political marriage huh. To have such a way of thinking at their teens. Is that normal for nobles and rich people?]

“… It’s just that some will reach that way of thinking faster than others. Is one way of taking it” (Eva)

[I think that a marriage where feelings of love exist is not bad though]

It is not that it isn’t bad. I really think that’s how a marriage should be. Something that connects the people that marry.

“Raidou-sensei is i-, no, pure huh. Since small, no matter who, they would put marriage as like and dislike but… as

expected, when one grows up they take into account the feelings as well as advantages and disadvantages. Of course, it is not like it can be put into words nor can be defined with a set definition" (Eva)

Hearing the talk of Eva-san, I remember the voice I heard in my head the first time I met her. Now that I think about it, it resembled the voice of her. That time I didn't link the contents with anything dangerous, so I wasn't sure nor did I take it in mind but…

Maybe she also has some sort of ulterior motive for being considerate with me. If that's the case, then it is a bit sad.

[Then what is Eva-san's meaning of the word adult love and the feelings that it contains?]

"… Let's see. In times it is a material for bargaining. If I say something like that, will sensei be disappointed in me?" (Eva)

[Who knows. However, I am not in the mood of reading anymore. For today I will be going]

A material for bargaining huh. Unexpected. Words that didn't connect to the word love at all. To have heard such a thing from a person who doesn't match that image is just… shocking.

I give her the book I was planning to read and leave the library.

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[And so Gin, what did you want to talk about?]

After leaving the Academy, I was caught by one student.

The owner of the voice that stopped me is a male.

It's the male swordsman that has been attending since the first lecture without missing one. He uses magic and seems to have been especially impressed by the style of Shiki, and while learning foundation techniques, there are times when he requests spars with Shiki.

From the five, I just remember the swordsman Gin that has been attending since the first day and the bow-wielding girl Amelia. <Choose one Gin or Jin. Jin felt like it sounded a bit weird so I changed to Gin, but do tell me>

Gin uses the sword as main and magic as support in battle, but Amelia uses magic as main and bow as support. I still can't say much, but well, the two of them show promise. Amelia does have desires for power, but more than that, she is in love with Shiki. Maybe she is changing the power of a woman in love into learning power, she is fast at memorizing and improvement.

Well, since I was called by a student I know of, I decided to just take lunch with him.

By the way, Amelia seems to have aesthetics in the afternoon.

Aesthetics.

When I heard this word for the first time in the Academy, my eyes went wide.

After asking in detail and researching in the library, it

seems that aesthetics is a concept that was brought about by the Goddess. An institution for the sake of pursuing beauty and spreading it.

Before spreading such stupid things, there should be techniques that need to be taught to hyumans or something like that. I was truly amazed. Because of that reason, there are names of cosmetics I have heard about before and there were times when I was asked if my company also handles cosmetic products.

Currently I don't manage those and I have no plans to do so in the future though. Things like lipstick and powder are stuff that Tomoe might suggest and I don't want that. In the current state, she is already making Asora pass through so much hardship after all.

Well, for now let's leave aside the topic of Amelia, aesthetics and cosmetics. Honestly, I don't even have the energy to retort.

I wavered, but in the end I decided on Gotetsu.

I haven't visited as frequently as Shiki. Even so, the taste is to my liking and since I am used to coming here, it is relaxing. Gin seems to have come here for the first time and was looking at the store interior with curiosity and smelling the scent of the food.

Asking for a private room at the inner part of Gotetsu, we both enter and take our sits.

"Ah that's right. Sensei comes from Tsige right?" (Gin)

[Yeah]

“Actually there are two students that were attending this Academy and are currently absent” (Gin)

[Fumu, continue]

“They are not scholarship students, but they have quite the skills and are promising” (Gin)

[If they are promising, why are they absent?]

“It seems that they are ill” (Gin)

N, ill? Since Tsige, these are the first ill people. Students… and their age.

Could it be…?

[Could it be, are you talking about Rembrandt’s daughters?]

“… So you already knew huh. I heard that Rembrandt Company has quite the influence in Tsige, so I thought you might know” (Gin)

[But what about it?]

“I don’t know if they were truly ill, but it seems like they will be returning to the Academy soon. And so, I was thinking about warning Sensei” (Gin)

[Warning? Also Gin, even though school friends are returning to school, you don’t seem happy]

“You see… Sensei probably doesn’t know but, those sisters are…” (Gin)

[If you are warning me, make yourself clear]

Why is it getting hard for him to say it? Whatis he trying to tell me?

“… Their personalities are the worst. They are the archetype rich girls and are particular about beauty. And they have good grades too, so that makes their personality even worse” (Gin)

…

….. Eh?

Those girls had that kind of personality? No well, didn’t they give more of a fleeting feeling?

No, wait a second.

Now that he mentions it, there have been no moments where I have exchanged words with those girls properly. *“Run away” is the only thing I was told*. <When he was curing the oldest daughter, she told him to run>

Even if you talk about beauty or whatever, taking into account the wife, the three of them were monsters.

Since Rembrandt-san is a good person, I thought that her wife and daughters were good people as well.

Rich ladies and have a bad personality? Are you serious?

“It seems you didn’t know. No well, lately Sensei has been targeted right? From the girls around” (Gin)

Maybe he took my silence as affirmation, Gin felt sympathy for me.

[Don’t say it. It makes my head hurt]

“When they return to school, it is better to not get their attention. The two of them are incredibly particular about physical appearance so it might be okay, but just in case. It’s just, if they have their eyes on Shiki-san, it might impede the lectures. Really, be careful okay? Ah, this thing called Nabe is delicious. I didn’t know about it～” (Gin)

…

I feel like he indirectly told me something rude. Also, I feel like he is actually worried about Shiki.

[Understood. I will tell Shiki as well]

“Thank you very much! Is this place your favorite Sensei? How tasteful～. Can I come here as well?” (Gin)

[Do what you want. Ah right. Shiki also comes here quite often. Since we are already here, how about I order you his favorite?]

“Is that okay?! I’ll eat! Eh? And Sensei?” (Gin)

[I remembered I had something to do. Just take it easy]

After ordering the cream Nabe on my way back and finishing my revenge for his rudeness, I winced as the seeds of troubles increased while I leave the store.

But, the Rembrandt daughters are ill-natured?

Are they really? Seeing Rembrandt-shi’s stupid manners, I could tell that they were truly loved daughters so I didn’t doubt it. Is he the type of person that no matter how the daughter acts he will still think of them as cute?

Well, if they are really going to be returning to the Academy soon, it will be clear at that time.

After being proposed twice on my way back, I arrivedat my store.

Chapter 93: Our Home

I have heard a worrying story about the Rembrandt sisters' personality.

I have confirmed it with a number of people, but the reputation of those girls is not good in general.

I am one of the people staying in Academy Town that's why I can't go ask directly, so I asked Tomoe and Mio as well as the eldwa managing the sub-branch, Beren, to investigate in Tsige.

This was recent.

And so today, since there were various reports arranged, Tomoe asked me to return to Asora and decide on a place to meet.

… Actually, recently I haven't stayed in Asora for long. No, honestly speaking, none. The most would be the occasional times I go to shoot the bow.

It's not like I have gotten into a fight with anyone. There was a more simple reason.

"Shiki, can we go now?" (Makoto)

Even if I am trying to evade it, I still have business there so I have no choice. That's why Shiki and I are returning.

"Yeah, it is fine. I have already arranged the reports on our side. It should be okay to leave the business to Lime" (Shiki)

"… Wait, you intent to open?" (Makoto)

It makes me uneasy, so maybe we should just make it a break.

“It isn’t a regular holiday and it hasn’t been that long since we opened the store, so I think it isn’t that recommended to close arbitrarily. I have ordered them to put on wait any business offers, so there’s no need to worry” (Shiki)

I am leaving a lot of the handling of the store to Shiki after all. I feel some sort of dignity there.

“If Chief Shiki says so, I will believe. Then… let’s go” (Makoto)

Without waiting for his answer, I open a mist gate.

While holding a melancholic feeling, I return to the Asora I missed.

Suddenly, I feel a thick smell and heat.

Just by being there I was beginning to sweat, and the warm and damp air enters my lungs.

That’s right, the climate of Asora that was unstable has recently been stabilized in a high temperature tropic climate.

How discomforting. It is hot and humid, and there’s no sight of rain. I’m not really sure if there are, but this makes me feel like there are tropical rain forests out there.

If it were on the level of everlasting summer it would be bearable, but this one easily surpassed the summer in

Japan and it was on the level of murder.

This is the reason why I haven't visited Asora recently. I mean, it is really harsh you know!

I thought it would soon change its climate again, but there is no signs of it changing. At this rate, won't the agriculture be affected?

I ordered Tomoe to investigate and she told me that she has gotten to the stage where the report is in order, but she will certainly come with a proposition which has high experimental rate. Well, for now this heat hasn't affected the area that much.

"It's hot as usual" (Makoto)

"Yeah. The Academy seems to be in spring and it is easy to live in, so it makes this place feel even hotter" (Shiki)

"Even though you say that, you have a refreshing expression though, Shiki" (Makoto)

"I don't mind heat that much after all. Raido- I mean, Waka-sama" (Shiki)

"… In this place I don't really mind which way you call me you know?" (Makoto)

"Mio-dono… doesn't seem to like you being called Raidou-sama that much so…" (Shiki)

While making a wry smile, Shiki scratches his cheek. He is worrying about the small details huh.

I just nod lightly and, shaking the air coiling around me,

enter my home.

It is even night and it is still this hot. Seriously, what is going on?

◇◆◇◆◇◆◇◆

“Waka-sama, welcome back!”

When I open the door of the hall where Tomoe and I decided the meeting to be, a big amount of voices suddenly welcomed me!

That scared me! My heart is beating like crazy you know?! What, just what is happening?!

With my mouth still open, I look inside the room and there I saw the residents of Asora gathered.

Doesn’t this look like… everyone is here?

Surrounding a big table, all of them were gathered without care for the race.

Was there such a crazy big table like this? No, there wasn’t. That means it was recently made. Using an incredible trunk of a tree just like that, they… Eh?

Isn’t it way too big? A table that can easily take more than a 100 people easily, just what kind of giant tree is that? Did they cut a world tree or something?

Also, this hall. The house was on the big side, but even so, it wasn’t this wide. With this, it isn’t a hall made for meetings, this is more like the halls aristocrats use to do their parties!

With surprise still showing in my face, I shake my head to the sides and check the situation. Everyone is looking at me with smiles in their faces.

And then, Tomoe and Mio as well as Ema come to where I am.

… That Tomoe, she is showing a face like her surprise was a total success.

Damn it, why is she so happy about tricking Shiki and me?

“… Shiki, are you okay?” (Makoto)

“Yes, Waka-sama” (Shiki)

…

He doesn’t show any signs of being agitated. The retainer that has been the longest time with me recently. Not only that, he is smiling.

Eh?

Eh, eh?

“Welcome back, Waka” (Tomoe)

“Welcome back, Waka-sama” (Mio)

When they are in a close distance, Tomoe and Mio welcome me once again. Ema was one step away and lowering her head.

“A, yeah. I am back” (Makoto)

While still confused, I answer with “I am back”.

“Good work, Shiki. Just like planned, it seems like Waka didn’t notice anything” (Tomoe)

Tomoe grins while talking to Shiki across me.

“Waka-sama, I am sorry. Tomoe-san said she wanted to do a surprise no matter what so… Lately, you haven’t come here at all, so please just think of this as a cute prank” (Mio)

Even Mio.

…

Shiki, you too huh. You were also involved in this.

Aaah!

Geez! They got me!

“Haaah~ you really did surprise me. I am back! Also, I am sorry for not coming back often!” (Makoto)

“Well, Waka seems to not be used to heat that much so I understand how you feel. Everyone wants you to return a little bit more often. Then, this” (Tomoe)

Tomoe gives me a glass. It has a characteristic scent. Alcohol huh. A night party, I don’t really mind. It’s a substance with pink color. If I remember correctly, this is a Sake that’s made by some sort of fruit and sold well in Tsige.

Everyone’s gazes gather on me and all of them contain expectation. Ah, I see. This being a dinner party and me,

the leading person, holding a glass means that huh.

“CHEERS!!” (Makoto)

I lift the glass high and announce the cheers. From several places, the sound of glass hitting resonates.

“It’s been so long right? Tomoe, Mio. Also Ema” (Makoto)

Before I noticed, Mio was holding a plate of food with the hand that’s not occupied by the glass. Wah, so fast. But the party has begun, so it isn’t bad to have as much fun as you can.

“Seriously-desu zo. Asking us to investigate while you go to the Academy, only minding about children and business” (Tomoe)

“Everyone missed you. Waka-sama, please come back to Asora more often. I beg of you” (Ema)

It’s from Tomoe and Ema. Well, I receive the obvious scolding. If it were just hot it would be one thing, but I simply can’t handle the humid sensation that coils around too well. When I don’t have business I don’t really want to do it that much, but I really should return to Asora a bit more.

My knowledge gathering in the Academy is going well too and there is no point in learning this world’s knowledge and common sense completely. It isn’t like I knew all about my place of origin Japan after all.

When I gain the basic common sense and knowledge, I should move to the next step. Knowledge is gained to be

used after all. Actually, I am able to playback my memories in Asora and I am clearly reading more than I did in my previous world.

I feel a bit bad about copying all the contents of the library just by reading, but it isn't like I am selling them so please forgive me, is what I use as an excuse. I am a small being.

However, I am a bit worried about how little Mio has talked. She spoke with me a while ago, so I don't think she is in a dangerous state. I was actually prepared to accompany her in all her talking.

"U-Uhm. If you want, please accept this" (Mio)

And when I thought that, Mio encouraged me to take the plate of food in her hands. T-To bring food for others. Maybe it was because she has been influenced by the adventurers and the people of town? That's admirable Mio!

"Mio, thank you. Heh~ it looks like what I have eaten in Tsige. Un, the flavor is thicker than in Tsige and suits my taste. It's really delicious" (Makoto)

It's like the improved version of the food of Tsige that I was thinking would be better if its taste was thicker. The details are subtly different, but it is probably made by someone from the sub-branch who took an interest in the cooking of Tsige.

I see. Just like this, there's also the pattern of Tsige influencing the culture of Asora. It is a happy happening to be able to eat the food of that town. I have been in

Academy Town so I haven't eaten the cooking of Tsige for a while.

"N, what's wrong? Mio, you were the one who brought it, so you eat as well" (Makoto)

"…."

Even when she recommended the food, Mio looks like she is enduring something and closing her eyes in silence. What? Today Mio is really weird.

"Mio?" (Makoto)

"Ahahaha! Waka, Mio is overcome with emotions!" (Tomoe)

"Tomoe… overcome with emotions?" (Makoto)

"That's right. What Waka ate was actually something Mio made" (Tomoe)

W-What?!

"Made?! Mio did?!" (Makoto)

"Yeah. It seems that she has awakened to cooking lately. She lowered her head to the cooks in Tsige and is learning cooking from them. Also, she is cooperating in reproducing Japanese food. Sadly, we didn't make it in time for this occasion. The food over there is practically all made by Mio with all her heart" (Tomoe)

Being told that, I once again look at the food spread on the table. Large plates filled with food, fruits beautifully cut up, soup in pots…

This… was made by Mio.

… Isn't that impressive?

Even if she awakened to cooking, it has only been a few months.

If you ask me about what food I could cook with that amount of time… Ah, it would be the time when I messed up the water in the rice cooker and it became a big uproar. A past I want to forget. <Not really sure what his past was. 炊飯器から出る蒸気でひどい水ぶくれを作って大騒ぎになった時くらいか>

I am totally in despair about the difference in learning capabilities. And at the same time, I am honestly impressed by how amazing Mio is.

To be able to reproduce the food she ate in the stores in such a short period of time.

"Mio, you are incredible. It was really delicious" (Makoto)

I tell her my honest feelings.

Mio trembles for a second and slowly opens her closed eyes. Her face was filled with satisfaction.

"Waka-sama, to think that cooking was such a wonderful thing. I didn't know" (Mio)

"Eh? Weren't you practicing for a while now? Also, you were practicing because you liked it right?" (Makoto)

"… No, I didn't understand. And today, I have learned

true happiness” (Mio)

“… I see” (Makoto)

“Yes! Waka-sama, next time I will prepare something even more delicious! That’s right, more, more-desu!” (Mio)

Suddenly making a proclamation, I thought that Mio was going to head to the food in the table, but she actually went the opposite way and left the hall.

W-What happened?

“Yareyare, that Mio. Looking at her like that, she probably intents to ignore the report meetings that are to come-ja na. Well, aside from the ingredient reports, she only has a few cases in Tsige that I already know of, so it shouldn’t pose any problems” (Tomoe)

“Tomoe, uhm, Mio is…?” (Makoto)

“Probably in Tsige. Right now, it seems like an adventurer with rare cooking techniques is there. It seems like in exchange of learning cooking from that person, Mio is taking care of a lot of difficulties for her. I pity her, looking at Mio’s state, she will probably be dragged into an all-nighter” (Tomoe) <Remember the barrier trespassing incident? Also no gender denotation here>

What a nuisance she is being. Even though cooking is like an odd job technique for adventurers. Well, Mio is looking after a lot of problems so it should prove as beneficial for her principal occupation. Well, there’s no need to worry huh. It seems like she is engrossed in

cooking, so I don't have to worry about her injuring that adventurer.

"Well, it is good that she is satisfied" (Makoto)

"Thank you for your lenient words. Then, there are A LOT of people that have been wanting to meet Waka, so let's go together. The meeting can be done later. Ah, I don't mind you drinking sake, but please try not to get drunk. Shiki, and master as well" (Tomoe)

"Looks like it will be a long night huh" (Makoto)

"I will restrain from Sake. I feel like it would affect my actions in tonight's report meeting after all" (Shiki)

"Shiki is really uptight-ja no. I won't say it is bad, but you are being too stiff. I think it would be nice to have a bit of alcohol in your system. Ah that's right, since we have the chance, let's have food brought into the room of Waka where we will be holding the meeting. Ema, can I leave this to you?" (Tomoe)

"Yes. I will have it done. Everyone seems to be so happy to see Waka-sama after a long time. Today's drinks seems to be quite a lot, so there will probably be people who will be dead drunk soon. I will gather people and have them prepare to nurse" (Ema)

Ema lively gives orders as she disappears into the crowd. Even if she looks like that, she is the type that likes Sake. We have made her take on a hard task. I will have tell someone to bring her food and Sake later.

Anyways, that Tomoe. I thought this at the time of Lime as well but, this girl, she really acts like a rogue. To drink

while deciding our plans huh. Since it is like this, I feel like I will hear good news but…

“Now now, Waka. From the eldwas first, in order. They can’t wait anymore. They have been doing their best. Do reward them please” (Tomoe)

“Yeah, I understand” (Makoto)

No objections here. Everyone is really doing their best. I haven’t been coming that often, but I understandplenty enough.

There’s no need for Tomoe to tell me. If I am enough, I want to go to the places of everyone and give them my thanks.

Along with Tomoe and Shiki, I head to the residents who have made a line and waiting for me.

Chapter 94: Late Night Report

“You guys may be tired, but we will begin the report. Is that okay, Waka?” (Tomoe)

“Yeah, of course. I’m counting on you okay?” (Makoto)

The party is still continuing with a number of heavy drinkers. Most of them went down already or were satisfied. The ones left are those that stay till morning.

We also tasted the fun of the party plenty enough and are now back in my room.

When we returned to my room, there was a decent amount of food and sake and also water. It felt like a night snack.

In that room of mine, the important report began.

“Then, first of all, there is one thing that might be important. Regarding the investigation Waka asked me about the battle region” (Tomoe)

“Ah, how was it? What do you mean by it might be important?” (Makoto)

Things like Sofia and Lancer’s tracks and the ring that can seal the Goddess’ powers. Places that can become some sort of hint. What did she understand?

“In the middle of my investigation, I encountered the hero” (Tomoe)

“H-Hero?!” (Makoto)

The hero as in the people that got kidnapped by the Goddess, the other earthlings aside from me?!

“Yeah. The one I met was the Gritonia Empire’s Hero. The one called Iwahashi Tomoki. From what I saw, he was about the same age as Waka” (Tomoe)

“Gritonia? Eh, Tomoe, weren’t you supposed to be in Limia?” (Makoto)

Even if they are adjacent, they are fellow major powers. The place where Tomoe went was a place close to the capital of Limia, so if there were people from Gritonia, there must be a reason for it.

“He was probably planning something unpleasant. Also, how to say it, he was trash. Well, since Waka was in Academy Town and I judged that he wouldn’t be any danger, I just ignored him though” (Tomoe)

… I am hearing a report about the current hero right?

“It seems like the Gritonia hero is one that is attached to greed. After the battle with the demons, he probably intents to wage a war between hyumans. Also, the princess that was accompanying him…” (Tomoe)

“Wait. Princess? Are you telling me the princess was moving together with the Gritonia hero?” (Makoto)

“Yes. Looking at that, I think they are quite close to each other. Just that part, I want Waka to learn from” (Tomoe)

Meaning that he placed his hands on the princess? The princess of a major power? He is quite free that Iwahashi guy.

Also, he is close to my age. Being told that one of the heroes is a person close to my age makes me feel happy but at the same time it doesn't. It's a complicated sensation.

"And?" (Makoto)

Leaving it as if I never heard her comment about learning from him, I push her to continue.

"… The princess' thoughts were surfacing out. There was the word "gun" mentioned. There was also the image of gunpowder, so there's the chance she is trying to make guns" (Tomoe)

"Guns?! It is obvious that it is completely below the magic here. Then, what is her objective?" (Makoto)

I don't see any merits of spreading guns in a world where magic defense can easily defend against. Even more if it is a major power.

And it is Gritonia, one of the countries which holds the most influence in hyumans. What is she trying to do? It will only lengthen the war unnecessarily you know?

No good. I can't get the reason Gritonia is trying to make guns. In the war against the demons, it would be safe to say that guns are totally useless. It may vary depending on how one uses it, but for the hyuman army that holds simple thought patterns like increasing attack power by leveling up, I really don't think they would be able to use it effectively against the demons who are said to be several generations ahead in strategy.

There's only one thing I understand. It is bad. No matter

how stupid it sounds, as long as it's the princess of a military country that is developing it, there should be some sort of objective behind it. There's no doubt that the gun development doesn't involve peace.

There's the possibility that it will be used for fights between hyumans. If small guns are made, it will probably have uses in assassination missions. If it is arranged properly, there's the chance that it won't be recognized as a weapon.

Gritonia Hero. His name was Iwahashi something. Why did you teach the hyumans of this world about guns?

"I don't know the details. Honestly speaking, they are quite the unpleasant bunch. Not only looking at their memories, I actually wanted to secretly kill them without telling Waka. But after thinking it through, I held back and decided to wait for your decision" (Tomoe)

"Then, you didn't fight them right? I am sorry, but I want to meet them at least once before deciding" (Makoto)

Iwahashi Tomoki huh. Including the Empire, I am a bit interested.

About the guns, if possible I want to destroy them before they come out to light. Because having weapons from my previous world spreading around here and probably bringing about death, I just don't like it.

Of course, since it is a major power, I would have to make a plan for the sake of the future. And then, I will have to make sure of the reason of why they are trying to develop something like guns. If not handled properly,

there's the possibility of similar things being created one after the other.

This… feels like it will be troublesome.

"As you will. Next, about the Goddess power and the information about the dragon killer. There was practically none. Just in case, I checked the bottom of the lake as well" (Tomoe)

"I see. Good work. What about information of me?" (Makoto)

The important part didn't have much progress huh. Just in case, I try asking Tomoe about information of me.

That time, demons and hyumans saw me after all. I want to know what kind of situation it has turned into in Limia.

"… About Waka, there was no information around. It seems there was someone rampaging right after that, so the rumors were all over that story" (Tomoe)

For a moment she seemed like she was pondering about something, and after Tomoe looked like she arranged her thoughts, she continued talking.

"Oh, rampaging? Just what happened?" (Makoto)

It is good the information of me faded and disappeared, but it sounds like a dangerous story.

"I wasn't able to pick up a detailed image from the ones who survived, but it seems like someone threw an attack so strong that it created a lake and made the fight stop"

(Tomoe)

“Created… a lake?” (Makoto)

“Yeah. Involving several rivers in the area, a quite big lake was created” (Tomoe)

“What is with that monster?! Isn’t its nature worse than Sofia’s? Isn’t there the chance that it was something the Goddess did?” (Makoto)

“Pfft!” (Tomoe)

Why do you laugh?

“Tomoe?” (Makoto)

“No, sorry about that. About that “thing”, there’s several testimonies about its appearance and it is shrouded in mystery. I could only tell that it is being called the “Devil”” (Tomoe)

Even though I was flashily fighting with Sofia and Lancer and my face was seen by a decent amount of demons. Was there a person there who didn’t have any particular figure and was able to finish the fight in one attack?

… I’m glad I was able to come back alive.

“Devil huh. To think such a monster was in that battlefield. In that case, more the reason to increase my abilities or it will be dangerous. Shiki, you may be busy as well but, don’t go missing training ok?” (Makoto)

“Y-Yes! Of course, Waka-sama!” (Shiki)

What? He is strangely humble. The surprise is already

over, so he should just act normally.

“Y-You are right. Thanks to the Devil, the investigation is proving difficult and the tool that’s said to seal the Goddess powers is currently hard to say anything. About the thought transmission, I have obtained favorable information and I am planning on going faraway tomorrow on” (Tomoe)

“Favorable information?” (Makoto)

“It’s information from the demons. It seems like the demon race has obtained a ground-breaking notion of the thought transmission and are using something like a secret transmission, a special sort of thought transmission. I think it will serve as a hint for the improvement of the thought transmission that Waka was looking for. Well, my gatherings are till this point” (Tomoe)

“Heh～, it is certainly a point of interest. A special thought transmission huh. Tte Tomoe. There’s not only that right? What about Lime, Tsige and the Rembrandt sisters?!” (Makoto)

“Ah, that huh. About the spy, in hyuman towns like Tsige it is easier to use a hyuman to gather information. After giving Lime his weapon, I checked how he was and thought that he was useful, so I made him the spy number 1 that’s all. About the recent investigation of the Rembrandt sisters that Waka asked for, it seems like they don’t walk outside that much, so I couldn’t get much. There was also the case of them being ill, making the information less. I thought about just asking their parents to save time, but I only listened to them boasting about

their daughters. Even when I tried to look at their memories, there was only sparkles and beautified moments, so I just couldn't take it. And so, the authenticity of the information is unknown. Well, you are going to be meeting them, so isn't it fine to just wait for then? Just for two hyuman girls. I don't think they will pose any problems" (Tomoe)

So there's no information because they were ill and didn't come out often huh. Even when I confirmed in detail with Tomoe, she hasn't even heard about the sisters' bad reputation.

Maybe because they are close to their parents, they are playing the good kids?

"The problem is that when I am in the Academy my stomach hurts. In a hyuman town it is better to use hyumans huh. Well, that is logical. And in truth, since Lime got to Academy Town, we have been able to gather quite a good amount of information. He is a real help. Thanks Tomoe" (Makoto)

"… I think, I understand the feelings of Mio a bit. Thank you for your kind words. I trained Lime firmly after all. Right now his winning percentage against Mondo is higher. So use him as much as you want" (Tomoe)

There's no doubt I am grateful. Tomoe's actions normally go one step further from what I want her to, but it's true that she is working well. Saying that she understands the feelings of Mio, Tomoe narrows her eyes happily and lifts the corners of her mouth into a smile. The expression of Tomoe was so imposing and different from her usual self that makes it feel even more charming.

I also heard a nostalgic name. Mondo huh.

Ah, the no-brain Forest Oni. I haven't met that person lately, but his atmosphere must have changed quite a lot. Akua and Eris are on the level that they can serve hyuman customers after all. However, it seems like Lime has gotten so strong he is now able to fight against the strongest of the Forest Onis. I didn't know that.

"Got it. Now then, it is probably our turn to report" (Makoto)

"No, actually there's one more thing. It's an important report regarding Asora. The reports on your side, I have already heard the ones that stand out the most from Shiki. It seems like you have become quite popular" (Tomoe)

Now it wasn't the cute smile from a while, but a grinning face.

"Stand out? That's the most irrelevant report of all. Well, if you have already heard it that's fine. Let's hear the important report of Asora" (Makoto)

Shiki. Counting your help in the surprise today, it seems like you have been meeting with Tomoe quite a lot. Even though you should have been busier than me. Just when does this guy sleep?

… There are also times when he stays up late reading books. Could it be, he actually has quite a lot of days where he doesn't sleep at all?

"Yeah, it's about the change of Asora's irregular climate. I discovered the reason. The way to solve it, I think it is

also doable” (Tomoe)

“!!”

Finally!

It is one of the problems Asora has been having since the beginning. It seems like the cause has finally come to light. The hectic climate that in times was summer, in others winter, some dry and others damp; it is finally going to be solved.

Even if I have a body that resists heat and cold, if the climates keeps changing so often, it will feel uncomfortable. There are times when the children or the old people have their physical condition affected. It is a problem that should be resolved.

“The reason for the change in climate is…” (Tomoe)

The report of Tomoe continues.

Chapter 95: Asora Changes With Him As The Origin

“Me?!”

I unintentionally raise my voice at Tomoe’s report.

It resounds well in the silent night where the report continues. I would feel bad if I wake up the people that are already asleep. Holding my mouth, I urge Tomoe to continue.

“Accurately speaking, it is the place where Waka is currently in. The places where you have passed through with the mist gate are affecting the climate of Asora, is what I think” (Tomoe)

“What? To think that Waka-sama was deciding the climate of this world. But in that case, it would be possible to change the temperature and weather drastically in a single day” (Shiki)

“Umu, the cases of radical changes are low though. It seems like in a day, there is a set time where it takes the last place Waka passed through and changes the climate largely-ja” (Tomoe)

“In short, what would happen in the cases where Waka-sama goes to Tsige in daytime and night at the Academy?” (Shiki)

“I still don’t know what would happen. To investigate it in detail, I would have to take some time with Waka. In truth, I don’t know if what’s affecting it is the place Waka has been in or the problem is the place where the gate

has been opened, so I still can't say for sure. Even the reason about it being the gates is not set" (Tomoe)

"… Fumu, this is a serious matter. For a short while I will be handling the issues in Academy Town. I will try to make it so Waka-sama can be here whenever there's no lectures" (Shiki)

Tomoe and Shiki seem to be continuing their discussion.

If talking about me, I was really surprised and no opinions were coming out. I was practically blank right now.

I mean, just because I am walking around the world, the climate changes along? Even though the weathershould be decided by things like: latitude, longitude, wind, tide, rotation, revolutions.

Is the climate in Asora decided by my location or something close to that? I-I can't even travel with peace.

In that case, this crazy discomforting heat has something to do with the location of Academy Town? No, not the location, it's more like because I am there.

"Then as a temporary counter-measure, we should have a mist gate fixed in a place where the climate becomes good and use that in the future?" (Makoto)

I finally try to bring out what I thought. It will be harsh not to use mist gates, but I can't be picky. In the worst case scenario, I will have Tomoe open the gates and bring the goods… Tte, that's no good. She seems to be in the middle of investigating. Her investigation is related to the thought transmission, so I don't want to stop it.

“No. Not being able to use mist gates would be inconvenient for Waka after all. We will try to narrow the conditions, and after pinpointing the reason, we will think about how to deal with it. I already have a few methods in mind” (Tomoe)

It was immediately rejected.

“I think that’s for the better. Luckily, until today there hasn’t been any serious problems for using the mist gate, and if we don’t use it, it would greatly affect our stocking. But using Tomoe-dono all the time won’t be efficient” (Shiki)

They are right. Just like Shiki said, not only the interference of the Goddess, even the Church that are faithful are not showing any movements. Regarding the mist gate and Asora, it is probably safe to assume that the Goddess still doesn’t know of it.

“How are we going to pinpoint the reason?” (Makoto)

I wanted to hear the concrete method. It is better to resolve problems that are able to be resolved as soon as possible after all.

“The first thing I want to test out is Waka opening several gates and leaving them all without removing the traces completely. Which gate would be affecting the climate or will it still continue with the climate of Academy Town where Waka is. I want to make sure of this one” (Tomoe)

“I see. If one of the gates affects the climate, in the case there’s a change, the theory of it being the place affecting it will be valid” (Shiki)

“That’s how it is-ja, Shiki. And after increasing the trial and error, it will be easier to pinpoint. It was a method I thought of in my time at Tsige. I have the climate recorded of when Waka was lodged in a village and returned to Asora” (Tomoe)

“As expected of Tomoe-dono” (Shiki)

She had a guess since Tsige, and was gathering data to back up her conjecture. Even though I didn’t try to put much mind into it and just considered it a strange climate of Asora. Shiki’s words were the representation of my emotions right now.

“Then, is it okay to just teleport to each town once more?” (Makoto)

“Waka, if you do that, there’s a chance that the Goddess will notice. I have several gates created already, so you will accompany me, and on top of that, Waka will create a gate once more” (Tomoe)

“Uh, you are right. Teleporting is probably dangerous. Sorry, then I am counting on you” (Makoto)

“Yes. Tomorrow we will go together at the time of departure. And, at night return to Academy Town to rest. The day after tomorrow will be when we will see the first results of the test. I will also take in mind that I have to return every day” (Tomoe)

I feel a bit of self-disgust. Even though I already knew that using teleport formations are probably dangerous, I still talked without thinking.

At this rate, Tomoe seems to intent to do this while

minding about her other business. This ability to deal with things, way of thinking. I have to learn from her.

“This will mean that several gates will have to be left open. Will the guarding be okay?” (Makoto)

“I will have the lizards and Arkes stop their town patrolling and deploy them in the area of the gates. Just in case, I will have the gate of Asora itself moved a bit and leave it for future decisions. I plan on not letting adventurers enter for a while” (Tomoe)

“You are right. The rumors are already spread well enough, so I don’t think there’ll be any problems. I will do the analysis as well-“ (Makoto)

“The analysis will be done by me and Ema, and I will gather several others, so there’s no need for Waka to go through the trouble. Thanks to Waka endeavoring on books, the numbers of books here has increased quite a lot, so the number of people that can work their mind have increased” (Tomoe)

The books I read in the Academy huh. So those are already being spread around. What a scary work speed. It’s on the level that I am worried about them falling from overworking.

And it also makes me feel like I will turn into an unneeded element, making me feel anxious. Everyone is way too reliable.

“Me also, if I am needed, please call me. I am interested too after all. I want to help as much as I can” (Shiki)

I see, Shiki has a lot of knowledge and he looks like he

would like to do experiments.

“No, you still have the soil improvement and the rice production case too, so I want you to concentrate on those. Also… you have the case of the fruits of Asora as well” (Tomoe)

“Muh, you are certainly right. In the end, in those cases I could only come up with negative methods to resolve” (Shiki)

“It isn’t limited to the people of Tsige. If one thinks about it, using the seeds of the fruits to grow them is an option that one can easily come up with” (Tomoe)

“Yeah. That they would grow atrociously was outside expectations though” (Shiki)

What he means by atrocious is…

The time when I sold fruits in the outskirts of Tsige. There were people who tried to grow the fruits of Asora from the seeds. By the way, it was apples.

It’s one of the fruits that have the highest price in Asora. They were probably thinking about cultivating them in the neighborhood. Just like what Tomoe said, something that was clearly predictable, the me at that time didn’t think of it at all.

Well, if we are talking about growing, it did grow. Even if I say that, I only confirmed it when it was still several centimeters and didn’t see if it could became a tree and give fruit.

However, even though it only grew a few centimeters, it

created an atrocious effect on the surroundings.

We learned of it after getting a request from the Adventurer Guild to investigate.

There was a strange report that part of the land rapidly became barren and the magic power in the surroundings became weak.

When we went to check, we saw that there was a sprout of an apple tree.

It seems that the crops and plants of Asora absorb quite a lot of nourishment in this world in order to grow. In the modern world I have heard of crops that would make the field radically decrease. This seemed just like that version but worse.

By the time we noticed, the fruits of Asora were already widely scattered in this world, so there's the possibility that someone still has seeds of it.

After talking with the residents of Asora as well, we made it so that we wouldn't give out that many fruits away. We didn't completely prohibit it though. It is probably a situation where it would be better to completely restrict it but, there's still a part I am concerned about.

Well, the plants are not at fault. We had the apple sprout brought back to Asora and replanted in the garden of my house. <Lol, are we gonna see a mutant apple tree?>

"And so, I remembered. Shiki, what happened to that experiment where you used students?" (Makoto)

Regarding the crops of Asora, in the Academy, the hypothesis of Shiki and “him” brought about an experiment. It is something like a human body experiment, but it has already been tested by the residents of Asora on how it would affect the hyumans and it probably doesn’t have any negative effects on their health.

If there’s an irregularity, I intent to have Shiki do treatment immediately.

“… Actually, it seems like, currently, there’s practically the same results as the residents of Asora. It seems like it affects the strength of the body as well, so I intend to continue but, it is just… very interesting” (Shiki)

“I… see. Does it seem like there’s any damage in their health?” (Makoto)

“No, rather, it seems like they are even healthier. It was an extremely nutritious fruit after all” (Shiki)

A certain change seen in the residents of Asora…

This is something that was pointed out by Shiki and Tomoe in the past and investigations began. I was told that the orcs and lizards look like they have received an increase in strength and magic power.

After confirming it in detail, it was judged that the reason was what they eat.

The effects varied between persons, but the intake of fruits was especially involved in the increase of strength. It may be little by little, but it was clear that it was increasing.

Just that, in the people that were not warriors didn't have that much increase in body strength, and the people who didn't have strong magic power didn't show much increase in magic power.

It turned out that it showed the best performance with people with special characteristics.

And so, with Shiki's proposition, we decided to try it on hyumans as well but, we don't know the limit of the enhancement and there's no assurance that it will have the same results on hyumans. At first, I rejected the idea.

But after doing lectures in the Academy numerous times, there was one student that was attached to strengthening medications and after making that person aware, I finally accepted the experiment.

The result is just as how the report said. It seems to have practically the same effects as the residents of Asora. Meaning, the fruits of Asora work as Status Up items for the hyumans as well.

In that case, would it be better to not bring out fruits from Asora?

"If you say practically the same, it means that there a slightly different inclination?" (Makoto)

"Yeah. The hyumans, compared to the orc and lizards, seem to have a higher rate of increase. At first, Gin who ate it, had an increase of about 1/3 of his magic power. The increase is practically on the same level as the Arkes who are a lot higher in base stats" (Shiki)

"So the effects are high huh. The limit is currently not

known even in the residents. More like, it would be bad if the hyumans learn of this" (Makoto)

"Yeah. For a while we should deceive them by saying that it is their talent budding. Luckily, Waka-sama's lectures are absurd in a lot of meanings, so it will sound plausible" (Shiki)

"The increase in strength works the same in hyumans huh. There are some plants that have the characteristic of saving up magic power. It really surprises me. I will tell them to temporarily stop the distribution of fruits. Well, thinking of such a benefit, it will take time before we will be able to secure enough to make experiments again. I think there are still fruits that have not been tested though" (Tomoe)

"In that case, taking into account the marriage proposals aiming for money, my lectures will become the topic for talks and students will begin to swarm around me once again huh. Hahaha… looks like it will be a bright future" (Makoto)

Even though events in the Academy will increase from now on…

Chapter 96: In Whole, A Favorable Wind

Finishing the test Tomoe proposed last night, I walked around checking Asora with Shiki and Ema.

In various places the work at hand was farming and construction. I was told of everything new they have found in the area.

When I heard about the expansion of the land, I learned that the needed facilities from one avenue have been completed and are now dividing the blocks for soil preparation. After finishing one street, putting everything in order is hard so they are probably doing it beforehand. Regarding the residents, there's quite the scale in the town, so I think they can do as much soil preparation as they want. This is… that maybe? The silent pressure telling me to gather more residents?

I did ask an excessive request like making a miniature town for the sake of having adventurers come in, and yet, a part of it is already done. I think that's quite impressive. Talk like "Being here and at long last reaching this point" may sound simple, but I feel like it is the best answer.

The agricultural field seems to have increased its efficiency a lot since Shiki came and did various things to it. If we talk about the things I have suggested in the agricultural field, it would be a simple way of making a paddy field, segmenting the field to use in turns and cultivate depending on the season. All things I learned in school and in field trips.

Moreover, there are things I'm probably wrong in. I am not specialized in that area, so I don't know what's most important.

That's why I think Shiki is clearly being more useful than me.

Of course, the orcs at the fields have been working on fields for way longer than me, so since they have experience, there were lots of things they already knew. Like, it isn't good to cultivate the same crop on the same field several times in a row. Repeated cultivation disruption, or something like that?

They are people that somehow managed to farm in a barren land. They are more reliable than me in that area.

"Now that I think about it. Ema, even though Shiki tinkered with the earth, are things like astragalus and white clovers still being grown in the dormant fields?" (Makoto)

I taught them about the astragalus and white clovers that are used to fertilize the earth, and suggested them to try growing those in fields that are lying fallow in the cycle.

If they are now able to reform the soil, then I think there's no need for it though. But it isn't that simple of an issue huh. If it's a potted plant, one ampoule would resolve most of the issues, but horticulture and agriculture are subtly different so talking imprudently might not be a good idea.

"Yes. The plants in here tend to grow extraordinarily fast, and there's also the issue of not being able to follow the

seasons, so we are doing the cycles with the number of cultivations. After consulting Shiki-sama, he said that there's sufficient merit in having them rest so we continue doing it. It also looks beautiful, so it serves as a playground for the kids that are in the middle of work, that's why there's some opinions saying that it would be a shame to not have them around. Luckily, in the present condition we are still able to fill the emergency stores with the amount of harvest, so I don't think there's a problem" (Ema)

A playground huh. In the time I was in Japan, it was a scene I have seen only a few times, but it is certainly true that looking at small flowers like astragalus and white clovers calm one down. To have them stay because of that reason might be good. Or is it too naïve?

Ah, that's right. In a situation where we can't count on the seasons, things like cycles are kind of pointless. I ended up talking about vague memories I had of when I read a history book. The growth rate is fast so they are probably managing somehow. Ema-san also said that the amount is plenty enough.

If I remember correctly, there was a time when we planted soybeans and in about 1 month it was green and ready to harvest. When I said some vague words like: "If there was a way to adjust the temperature and amount of light, we would be able to speed up the growth" and just like that, a system to harvest them in one month was created. I was seriously surprised. I felt like I saw Tomoe's ability when she is serious.

"Ah… seasons huh. In that part, please wait for a bit more. We are currently investigating" (Makoto)

“Ah, no! I didn’t mean it like that…” (Ema)

Tto, damn it. I didn’t intend to blame her or anything.

“From the previous explanation, it seems like the amount made has increased decently” (Makoto)

“Yes. Following the instructions of Shiki-sama, we adjusted some things and are now able to harvest in about 2 weeks” (Ema)

2 weeks?!

To take 2 weeks after planting the seed. Even though 1 month was plenty fast. In that case, there won’t be any problems with food and soil in Asora. I have been receiving several reports of people from the wasteland wanting to migrate here. It might be time to increase the amount of residents.

I look at Shiki as if looking at an abnormal-, I mean, at a genius.

“It wasn’t much”, is what his face was saying.

“I just used what Waka-sama said as a base, arranged the elemental spells that could be used, and told the orcs in an easy to understand way. The arable land is currently sufficiently self-supported, but I plan on thinking up more things to improve it for future’s sake. I think I will be concentrating mostly on the product improvement” (Shiki)

It is already to the point that one could find food just by walking around normally, so it should be okay to not push yourself so hard.

There's still some places that are not cultivation fields yet, but there's plans to do so, so it seems like by increasing the area and gathering numbers, it will be totally fine.

"… Shiki, I am happy that you are ambitious but, try to get enough sleep okay?" (Makoto)

"Even if there are times when I want to sleep, it won't affect my body's health even if I don't, Waka-sama" (Shiki)

"Don't joke with such a straight face please" (Makoto)

Shiki may be saying it seriously, but I just push it as a joke. Look, even Ema is making a wry smile.

"U-Uhm, you see. Waka-sama, as you can see, there isn't much problems with the cultivations and paddy fields but…" (Ema)

"Yeah?" (Makoto)

"There's something… I want to consult you about" (Ema)

Saying that, she presses me and Shiki forward.

What? Did they find a new plant and are having problems?

We left the vast field that stretched out in front of us.

The orcs that were working and the ones that were in break, all lowered their head and saw us off. We both followed after Ema.

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The place where Ema guided us, had several plant stumps growing. They probably found them and brought them here with stump and all.

A big plant of 2 meters, no, about 3 meters. Its form makes me think of tropic but, this is…

Looking at it to see what was its identity, I found a familiar fruit growing from it.

Ah, so it was this.

But why are the Forest Onis here? Are they helping in gathering as well? For some reason Komoe-chan is here too. She would normally come running to me, but right now she is beside the Forest Onis and looking at the plant in question.

“This is a banana. So there’s even this here” (Makoto)

I am surprised that it was able to grow so big in a place like Asora. This is my first time seeing it growing from its tree. Maybe the bananas are unexpectedly tough.

That they are yellow might be because they are ripe already. If I remember correctly, they should be green at first.

“Yes. According to Waka-sama’s memories, this is supposed to be the fruit called banana that grows in hot places, but…” (Ema)

Ema seems to be bewildered. When I look, the forest Onis and Komoe-chan are fidgety and unable to calm down. What is it? Maybe because the Forest Onis have the image of always being wringed out by Tomoe, seeing

Komoe-chan acting the same as them makes me feel uncomfortable.

“Yeah, they seem to grow in places with hot temperature like the current Asora. So?” (Makoto)

“We checked the reference book and it seems that the banana grows black seeds inside it. But in the stumps that the Forest Onis checked, they couldn’t find any such seeds” (Ema)

Reference book. She is probably referring to a plant reference book. I did read a book like that in the past.

But, did bananas have seeds? I feel like it didn’t have…

Ah, could it be…

“Ah, maybe it’s because they originally had them” (Makoto)

“Had them? If they don’t have seeds, we won’t be able to cultivate any new ones. How do they propagate?” (Ema)

“Uh?! Uhm, there are fruits that are modified according to the people’s convenience, so maybe for some reason the bananas began to grow with that kind of trait” (Makoto)

It’s Asora, a place where one can suddenly be able to harvest delicious radish, carrots and tomatoes. Those are also in the shape after being altered. The apples, pears and even the peach are like that.

That’s why I thought that them being modified was not anything strange.

This is bad. It doesn't answer the question of how to propagate them.

"If I remember correctly, it is possible to peel the skin easily and eat it, moreover, it is incredibly delicious, however, in that case, it means that when this batch runs out, they will go extinct" (Ema)

Hearing the words of Ema, the Forest Onis make a grim face. Even though you guys are the ones that discovered it, why are you so sad about it?

Tears are welling up from Komoe-chan's eyes?!

"T-That is troubling!!"

"Uwu～"

Even if you tell me you are troubled with a serious face…

"… Actually, when the Forest Onis first discovered this and brought it here, they uhm… seemed to have liked it quite a lot" (Ema)

So it turned into their favorite food?

When I turned to the Forest Onis to confirm, they nodded their head up and down like a broken toy. Komoe-chan is the same huh. I thought she had the same taste as Tomoe, but she has a young outward appearance so she probably has a different thought pattern.

"We don't know of anything that tastes so good. When we ate this banana for the first time, we learned that there's nothing that can compare to it in this world!"

“Bananas are delicious. I really like them. I always eat this after training” (Komoe)

… They are talking like they are doing drugs, oi. Saying “in this world!” makes me want to draw back. Komoe-chan unusually requests something of me. She is an unexpectedly shy girl, so it is quite a rare scene.

It’s just that in times of practice her bashfulness disappears and she silently punishes them. Sometimes, she is scarier than when Tomoe and Mio are there.

“I-I see” (Makoto)

“That’s why! We tried our best to bring it here without hurting it and investigated a lot, but we weren’t able to find anything resembling a seed. A-At this rate, we will lose the bananas!”

That means, they were only able to find a number of banana trees in the exploration area?

Withdrawal symptoms huh. That’s what one would think seeing the Forest Onis trembling and clinging onto the closest banana tree they had. It is funny, but it has turned into a picture I can’t laugh at. Their faces seem to be serious and look like they are about to cry. So after training, Komoe-chan has been steadily consuming the low amount of bananas huh. The Forest Onis are probably feeling a great deal of fear.

“I remember now. When the bananas grow, after that they will wither-” (Makoto)

“?! U-Uwaaaaa?!”

“?!!”

An incomprehensible scream. They are holding their heads and grieving. They even cut off my words just to scream that? The speechless Komoe-chan looks kind of cute.

But, is there are way aside from seeds?

I look at Shiki.

However, he just shakes his head. Well, that’s natural huh. He is specialized in earth, but that doesn’t mean he is knowledgeable of plants. He did say that he begin agriculture and earth magic when he arrived at Asora after all.

How should we do it?

The pineapple for example, they cut off the suckers and plant it to have them reproduce that way. But there’s no assurance that bananas are like that too. By the way, that’s information from tv.

They give the same tropic feeling, so maybe it can?

Umu…

“So it really was a tree that would wither within a year huh. There were opinions around that said the same” (Ema)

Ema also looks sad. It may not be as much as the Forest Onis, but it seems like she considers them tasty.

It is surprising how they can tell it is a perennial plant or

a 1 year plant just by looking at the tree. Are there pros in the orcs?

I want to do something for them though.

… I am not sure if it would work the same as with suckers, but there is also grafting which is a method that doesn't need seeds as well. There's the problem of compatibility, so it is something that it is not certain will work and I only know a few kinds. Well, it is a technique that's worth mentioning.

"Uhm, you see. It is not a sure method but… there's a technique I know of" (Makoto)

I explain about suckers and grafting to Ema and the Forest Onis.

Ema seemed to be interested in the grafting but the Forest Onis spiritedly heard both of them. It is somewhat fresh to see the Forest Onis listening to me seriously. Komoe-chan is also nodding, but it is probably on the level of "I see~"; In the case of this girl.

Don't let any word slip by, that's what one could see from the determination of them. When the explanation ended, Ema asked me for cooperation on grafting. The Forest Onis ran off to the place where the banana trees came from to check if there's suckers there. Komoe-chan also followed them.

"The image of the Forest Onis is a lot different from the time they came here" (Makoto)

"Tomoe-sama and Mio-sama, as well as Komoe-sama have been raising them quite a lot after all" (Ema)

“Ha…hahaha…” (Makoto)

“Waka-sama, thank you very much for the incredibly interesting information. Grafting sounds like it will serve us a lot, so I think about trying it out” (Ema)

“Go ahead. Even so, were suckers not in the reference book?” (Makoto)

“Yeah. Even if we call it a reference book, it is a book that is based off of what Waka-sama passed his eyes to after all. It isn’t like it is the exact book but a recreation of the book, so it is a given” (Ema)

I see.

Certainly, if it was taken from my memories, leaving aside the parts I don’t remember, the parts I didn’t see would be impossible to recreate.

Even so, the Forest Onis, to think they like bananas. It is probably something that only exists in Asora, but what are you doing by increasing your weaknesses.

I can already picture Tomoe taking their bananas and having them train while crying. Just how pitiful can they become.

I don’t think it will be a solution, but let’s have Ema give Mondo some bananas.

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It’s really been a while since I have come to the workplace of the dwarfs.

Even though their tasks are not all about using fire, it doesn't change the fact that this place is hotter than anywhere else. My legs can't help but recede when there's no business here.

Lately, most of the time I have come here only to receive reports.

"Oh Waka. Last night you took care of all of us and we all passed a fun time. Thank you very much"

"I am happy that you enjoyed it Elder" (Makoto)

"Each time we receive invitations like that, the ingredients and food variety increase so I can't help but walk there every time. I was surprised to see that last night the home cooking of Mio was the main. I was astonished"

"It seems like she is doing it because she likes it, so if you want, please do accompany us in the future as well. At some time, Tomoe might begin a sake tasting contest, so I think that the dwarfs might find that more to their liking" (Makoto)

"Oh! Sake huh! That's nice, I am looking forward to it. We will have to increase our work a step higher in preparation for that time"

"Ahahaha, do look forward to it. And so Elder, do you have an urgent business today? I heard it from Ema" (Makoto)

The eldwas Elder's look is that of an advanced age old man. To the point that instead of a dwarf, he looks more like a short build demi human.

Just as his looks tell, he is a good-natured person, but even with those looks he is still able to handle a hammer that easily surpasses his stature, so there's no mistake that he is the dwarfs' elder. They are all tough with their tools huh.

No matter what, I always end up talking politely because of his seniority. Just this point, I just can't help but doing it instinctively. It is carved in my mind after all.

"So that's why you went through the trouble of coming here. No well, it is about the material that Mio-sama brought to us but, there's something that worried me. Ah, Ema-dono. About the requested equipment, we have been able to make part of it, so could you please take a look. It is on the usual workplace"

Saying so, the elder gives me something. Ema nods and lowers her head to me.

"Waka-sama, I can go there for a bit?" (Ema)

"Of course" (Makoto)

"Then, please excuse me" (Ema)

Seeing her off, I return my gaze to the Elder. When I do that, he had a material in his hands, or more like, he put the wreckage on top of the desk.

"!! This is…" (Shiki)

Shiki reacts to it. He seems to be incredibly surprised.

"This is something that Mio-sama brought when her kimono was damaged"

“Mio’s kimono was?” (Makoto)

Was there such a mamono walking at the entrance of the wasteland?

It damage the kimono? If I remember correctly, the only ones able to do that were the Size Ants that came out in mass from a hole and were able to slightly tear it.

“Yeah, the back was completely ragged. Fortunately, her body had no injuries”

“?!”

Wa?!

An enemy that could damage her from the back?! Shiki is also quite surprised. Well that’s obvious, if Mio doesn’t lower her guard, her defense and perception are top level.

Tte, wait. No injuries?

“… Yeah, no injuries. It made us the craftsmen feel quite powerless”

“That means, only the clothes were damaged?” (Makoto)

He probably noticed my question from my expression. The Elder-san explains to me while placing a finger on his temples as if enduring a headache.

“We didn’t hear if she just regenerated or if she hadn’t received any injuries to begin with, but Mio had no injuries. If she didn’t tell Waka-sama, it is probably because she really didn’t receive any injuries and deemed

it as nothing important. And so, we have been thinking about increasing the capabilities of the equipment in order to create articles that can protect you respectable ones, but this material that's the very thing that damaged the kimono… There's some problem with it"

"Was it incredibly powerful?" (Makoto)

That Mio. Seems like cooking was more important. She most likely didn't report because she didn't receive any damage. Even so, does she really understand what armor is for? I will have to sermon her a bit about properly making requests for the craftsmen to make the adequate equipment. If she is satisfied just by the clothes having the same sensation, it would be too pitiful for the craftsmen. By clothes I mean everyday clothes, the ones that the orcs go through all the trouble to weave for Tomoe and Mio. I think that those are also hard to make, but what the dwarfs are making is armor. For the sake of protecting life. Armor that's used to protect you from attacks is a whole different story.

"No, the thing itself is quite good"

Quite good. If Elder-san says quite good after looking at it, it should be quite the rare thing.

"…."

Shiki is staying silent. How unusual. Even though he likes materials and armor. He was really happy about that staff too.

"After hearing Mio-sama's story and investigating the material and kimono, we arrived at a conclusion. Most of

the opinions said that it was just a mamono with high attack power and had grown big by chance. However, it ate a wind spirit, moreover, a middle class one in a very early stage. In the wasteland, there are a few amount of wind spirits and if we talk about middle class ones, then even I haven't seen them. Thinking about the original power of the mamono, no matter if the spirit was weakened, it is impossible to think that it would be able to predate on a spirit. This is just a personal opinion of mine, but I feel like there's some sort of underlying artificiality"

"An act? You are saying that someone did this with something in mind?" (Makoto)

That someone caught a spirit and had a suitable mamono eat it to have it evolve? What a dangerous talk.

"Mio-sama encountered it outside the wasteland. It seems to be a highway that extends onto Tsige. That means, it crossed the mountain range that divides the wasteland"

"You are saying that because Mio encountered it the fatal damage was low?" (Makoto)

"Yes. The Forest Onis investigated and the demons in the area didn't show any sort of movements that stood out. Without knowing the reason, I am feeling a bit anxious"

"Certainly. Having the feeling of someone doing something below your feet is not comforting after all. Understood, I will…" (Makoto)

Investigate it. Is what I wanted to say, but in that moment…

Shiki silently raised his hand.

“Shiki-sama?”

“What’s it, Shiki?” (Makoto)

“… M-Me” (Shiki)

“What?” (Makoto)

“The one… who did experiments to that mamono… was me!” (Shiki)

““… Eh?””

The voice of me and the Elder overlapped.

“It was something that happened before meeting Waka-sama. In the time I was inside the body of a Forest Oni that was one of the many experiments I had done. I captured several middle class wind spirits and after weakening them to the point of not being able to resist, I made a mamono eat it” (Shiki)

“…”

“By eating a spirit, I thought that it may evolve into something like the spirit or a change close to that. But it turned into a failure that only increased the power of its scythe… and since I lost interest in it, I threw it away” (Shiki)

Threw it away you say, Shiki. What kind of dangerous thing are you doing.

“Oh, so Shiki-sama was the one who did it. Ah～, knowing the reason, the weight in my chest has lifted.

With this, I will be able to concentrate on the creation of Mio-sama's armor without any distress"

"I am sorry, Elder"

"It is fine. The material was used for the weapon of an adventurer somewhere, but it became good training for Beren. It seemed like he was worried that something similar would happen to Mio-sama again, but now he can have peace of mind"

"?! Could it be you are planning on telling Mio?!" (Shiki)

"… Ah, if I do tell her, Shiki-sama might be scolded. Waka-sama, what should we do?"

The Elder was concerned about Shiki's wellbeing and passed the decision to me.

"… Shiki" (Makoto)

"Y-Yes" (Shiki)

"… Well, get scolded. It is true that the kimono was turned into rags after all" (Makoto)

"?!!! Aaaahh…." (Shiki)

The writhing Shiki-san. It was an unexpected position but…

Well, I think you can still return, so do your best Shiki.

Giving a sidelong glance at Shiki who was having a face like it was the end of the world, the Elder and I nodded to each other.

Chapter 97: The Temporary Teachers' Staff Room

It feels like a long time since I have returned to Rotsgard. Well even if I say so, it's only been a few days though.

Because of Tomoe's hypothesis about the climate, the investigation has increased the time I am in Asora.

It seems like that genius samurai-wannabe's thinking was mostly correct, so after the day of the report, the climate of Asora constantly changed because of the experiments.

Well, we were using the hypothesis as our base, that's why we notified the residents beforehand, so no real problem occurred.

It seems like the last gate I opened is the one affecting it. It is practically certain.

By that I mean the remains of a gate that not only Tomoe and I can open, but Mio is able to use as well. Shiki said that he is almost able to use it. How reliable.

That's why if the gates are properly closed there's less chances of affecting the climate.

There's arias involved, but the only difference is that I use an aria or not to make the gate appear, so it doesn't inconvenience me. Changing the gate I open at the Academy as one that doesn't leave traces, Asora now has a gentle climate that's close to that of early summer. That it rains a bit often is one of the cons, but residents like the lizards were happy. It seems like they liked the tropic climate quite a bit, so I feel slightly bad for what I did. I

hope they are not being considerate.

Tomoe went to investigate again. Giving out a number of points, she said that she would find places for all the seasons. The day that Asora has the same four seasons as Japan might be close. Unlike me, Tomoe seems to be able to predict the future results with the data gathered, so she is probably able to estimate the adequate places from the patterns in the climate changes.

Today is a lecture day. Asora seems to have calmed down, so there shouldn't be any problems in me returning. I am thinking about making this place my center of actions again. The person that is teaching Mio cooking seems to be there for a limited amount of time, so since time is precious, she has been staying in Tsige. I don't know if she is staying there or doing all-nighters, but there seems to be days when she doesn't return. If she is interested in something she will do it to her best, that's truly Mio-like. I don't know what kind of cooking she is learning, but I think one day she will serve it to me, so I am looking forward to it.

"Raidou-sama, regarding the several days of business, it seems like there wasn't any remarkable problem and has been going smoothly. They are also growing properly" (Shiki)

Shiki does a report of the sales in the time I was in break, and talks to me satisfied. He returned to Rotsgard several times, but he was mostly in Asora. And yet, the shop didn't have any problems, so he must be happy about it. I am happy too.

"You are right. If we were able to rotate the people

working and have them able to teach the newcomers, it would make things a lot easier. Hey Shiki, about Rembrandt-san and his daughters…" (Makoto)

"Ah, the case where you left a letter with Mio-dono right?" (Shiki)

"Yeah. Thinking about the day they left Tsige, I think they will be arriving here soon but, did you obtain any information?" (Makoto)

"Not really. Most I could get was that they would be arriving at the Academy soon. They are daughters of an influential merchant, so maybe they have orders to stay silent. Lime was also unable to gather any information in town" (Shiki)

"I see. Well, when they return to the Academy, I will give my greetings. You already gave the report of the things that are needed for today's lecture right?" (Makoto)

"Yes. I have already received permission beforehand, so I don't think there will be much problems" (Shiki)

Shiki really acts properly. If he makes a mistake this time, I will turn a blind eye for him.

He was a bit bullied by Mio because of the mamono incident after all.

Let's see, after today's lecture, let's invite the students that have free time to Gotetsu. Jin seems to have liked the nabe, so maybe the other students will also be happy. I am not thinking about reeling them in with food, but I have to be kind from time to time.

Before going to the lecture, I go to the desk I was given and check if I have any urgent messages. It's like a staff room for temporary teachers. Maybe they have extra space, when I requested for Shiki to accompany me, they also put up a desk for him.

It's a place I use only when I am looking for shelter in lecture days and in days where the library is boisterous.

"Otto, this is…" (Makoto)

My voice reflexively comes out. On my desk there were quite the amount of documents and letters piled up. Even though I came here because I had some leisure time before the lecture began, with this, it feels like I don't even have enough time to skim through them.

"What an incredible amount. For now, I will sort them out, so will you look at the necessary ones?" (Shiki)

[Let's do that. I don't need the confession ones, so just dispose those]

"Understood" (Shiki)

Luckily, the desk of Shiki only had love letters, so I can ask of him without any worries. Just, the letters on his desk, there are many that seem to be done with a lot of effort. It makes me interested.

Oh, they are decreasing.

The chaotic pile of paper is being beautifully assorted.

I can hear the voice of admiration of someone. Well, it is probably a teacher who has lectures today too. Fufufu,

you must be jealous right? But Shiki is ours so I won't be giving him.

As expected, the disposal corner is the one that has the most. To think that the absurd proposals would even come here, it is already on the level of harassment.

There seem to be a few documents that I should check, so I begin checking them.

Ehm, a request to accept a student huh. The ones I have are mostly like this.

Now that I think about it, the teachers did tell me. That after a while of holding a course, I would be able to select the students that I want to accept in my lecture. They also told me that this system didn't have much point unless you are a popular lecture and they are normally all accepted.

But I am happy for it. If they are clearly people that don't have the power and only have other objectives, coming to me would only trouble me. If I am able to reject them through documents, I am grateful.

… There are a lot of girls. Their main subject and specialty are clearly different from mine. I really don't need this kind of popularity.

Okay, trash. This, trash too. This girl, to the trash too. Ah, a man. Close enough, come back when you have trained more. From a third person's perspective, it looks like I am quite popular. For the teachers that are having troubles gathering students, my actions of putting the seal of rejected must look pretty strange. The number of

students I have now are 5 so I am in the same boat as them.

N? Assistant teacher petition? What is this?

When I check the contents, it seems to be documents asking my presence as an assistant lecturer. I forgot that I can participate in other lectures as an assistant. Because I didn't intend to do it anyways.

The lecture's subject is…

Hand-to-hand art. I am a magician and merchant though. Is this bullying?

Axe art. It isn't like I am not interested in axes. The same as above.

Practical use of recovery medications. Something that Shiki might want.

Limia Kingdom history. Don't know the point.

Nothing decent.

Setting aside the requests of Limia Kingdom history and the others, I breathe out a sigh. Well, it isn't like I have seen the details, so for now I will take the assistant teacher documents back.

Another request to enter my class? Ehm, let's see, this time is…

Ah, found it.

Sif Rembrandt. Yuno Rembrandt.

These are Rembrandt's daughters no doubt. So they have already returned to the Academy. Rumors are so half-assed.

No, that's not it. Today those two will be returning. Then that means my lecture will be the number one lecture they will be returning to. In that case, should I make today's lecture lighter? I need to rehab after all.

But this time is a fun lecture I have announced beforehand. I did accept their petition, and there's only one other student among the petitions that I think has the requirements to participate as well, so let's just split the 3 new students and I will take care of them.

Looking at the information of the Rembrandt sisters, I think that the ability of them is pretty high compared to other students. Just like how Jin said, talented. Well, it is not sure if they still possess the same skills as before though. They did suffer a serious illness after all.

The older sister Sif is older than me huh. 19 years old. She seems to be a magician. Her element specialties are earth and fire. Heh~. To write two is pretty unusual. Also, the earth one has the divine protection of a spirit. She will probably be taught mainly by Shiki.

The little sister is 15. Oh! She uses bows. Also, spears? This is quite the rare combination. Bow and spear. Don't tell me she investigated me and Shiki beforehand, and wrote whatever came up. Her magic seems to be in basic level and they are mostly enhancing spells huh.

Rembrandt-san is aiding me, so I will accept both. Mixing public and private? No, in terms of ability there's no

problems.

If I had to say something, it would be that I don't know if they were taking Shiki and me in mind and wrote lies. The older one wrote that she has a spirit's divine protection in her earth element, so I don't think there's a lie in that one though. But the part of her little sister using bow and spear is just… In the Academy's lectures I haven't used the bow once, so she probably heard it from her father.

The other girl. It isn't like I chose her because she is my type. In my lecture there's four men and one female. The lone woman Amelia grumbles saying that she wants more girls (even though she doesn't want other girls to get their hands on Shiki), so I think it will have a good balance of 50/50. Her motive and abilities are pretty high. It seems like it hasn't been long since she transferred here from a small country close to the Gritonia Empire. She is probably searching for several classes to attend. There's the probability that my class doesn't fit her and she leaves, but she is a scholarship student so I think her desire to improve is high.

"Raidou-sensei, can I have a bit of your time?"

I have Shiki take the papers for the studentpetitions that were accepted to the staff room. I don't know how much it will take to accept it, but by next week I will probably be able to meet the sisters face to face. If it's today, they will probably just think that it is a weird class. If they think it is weird in a positive way, there won't be any problems. Probably.

[What is it?]

Soon after Shiki left the room, one of the teachers stood up from hisseat and talked to me. How rare. <No gender specified>

“Actually uhm, it’s about the injury medication you handle in your business…”

[Yes, I certainly do handle wound medications]

“From now on, in the time between summer vacations till the school festival, my lectures will have more dangerous practical trainings. So if possible, I wanted to ask if you could provide me with about 10”

Ah, so that’s how it is. I don’t know if it is dangerous because the school festival is coming, but instead of replenishing the 10 emergency medications every day, it would be better to just ask me to have them in order. Right now I have a number restriction when selling and the wound medications are not something the general public buy constantly. If there’s customers that want to buy in large numbers, Lime and the others are managing it. Well, if it’s to heal the wounds of the students, I don’t have any objections.

[Ah, I see. Understood. If you say that it is for the sake of the lectures, then I will happily prepare them. If you want to, you can come as soon as tomorrow to my store]

“Thank you very much! Ah, I’m so glad. The reputation of Kuzunoha Company had rose higher, so I tried it too, but it really has incredible effectiveness. I really wanted to bring them as insurance, but since it was so popular, it was pretty hard to get”

[I apologize for the inconveniences of not making that many]

Since the number restriction, the amount that have reached to different hands has increased, but for the people that are looking for numbers it is definitely inconvenient. I have received requests from several medical stores too. Right now we are in the middle of considering our options. If they bring out something like reserves for the Academy, it will trouble me. It may create oppositions saying that I can actually make as many as I want. It will be quite the big business discussion, so even if this type of talks come in the future, there will be people that would want to try crushing us. I don't think there's anything to worry about though.

"No! With that kind of effect, that's obvious. The price is clearly cheap. There won't be many situations where we would need to use that wound medication, so I think that with just 10 it will be able to last till the school festival"

[It can only maintain its outstanding effects for 3 months so be careful of that. We also have other things in sale, so please do pay a visit at our store again]

"Understood. I will certainly do!"

At the time he called me, he had a pretty stiff expression but now he is cheerful as he returns to his seat. If he says he wants 10 for insurance, he must be quite the popular teacher.

Just in case, I will have Lime check if he is actually using them for what he said he would. It would be troublesome

if it is a new method for resale. Right, I did say tomorrow but let's push it to a few days later and investigate his background.

Shiki returned. Just in time too.

Then, let's go to class.

Chapter 98: The Anticipated Lecture And Baptism

There were 8 people.

No, I wasn't actually confident that the original 5 would stay.

Next time we will be doing something interesting. That's what I said last week after all.

That there are 3 extra people must be because the speed that the staff clears the documents is probably abnormal. Leaving aside the students' level, the system in Rotsgard is pretty impressive. I thought that not only the level of the students but the hyumans in general were plain.

But since at the top there's Sofia, they are probably impressive. Well, the middle probably isn't though.

[From today on, there will be 3 more people attending]

I wrote it simple and look at the three. Right now Shiki and I are facing the 8 students, but I beckon the three new students to come to my side. The Rembrandt sisters had pretty similar faces. As expected of sisters. Just that their hair style is different and their bearing differ, so they give different impressions. There was a time when our eyes met for a bit and they both smiled, but it was only for an instant. They soon made serious faces and reunited with the 5 students. They don't look that ill-natured to me. They seem to properly understand their position as students.

Just that looking at Jin and Amelia, maybe because they

didn't expect that attitude from the sisters, their faces had a dubious expression. That they are not completely shocked must be because they are nervous about today's class. The Rembrandt sisters are gathering attention even when they are just standing still, just how much of a bad reputation do they have.

[You three, introduce yourselves]

In turn, first the sisters and then the remaining one. After that I will have the other five present themselves as well.

"It's a pleasure, my name is Sif Rembrandt. I have returned today, so there might be people that already know me. I was absent because of an illness, so until I recover completely, I may be a bother, but please do take care of me. My race, as you can see, is hyuman. My specialty is attack magic; elements fire and earth. I have a spirit's divine protection in my earth element" (Sif)

When Sif makes a last bow, her silky blond hair droops along with her. Her type of hair is straight. Looking at her long hair flowing, it is truly beautiful. The last time I met her, she practically didn't have any hair after all. She is practically a completely different person. The word young woman truly fits her. Conversely, I can't imagine her as a combat type. She probably doesn't do close combat.

"Nice to meet you! My name is Yuno Rembrandt. I am Sif Rembrandt's little sister and just like her, I have returned just today! The reason is the same, illness. I am still unable to move at my 100% but I will do my best! My race is of course, hyuman. My specialty is physical combat. But as you can see, I have a short build so

instead of vanguard I am more of a center defender. My weapons are spear and bow; depending on the situation, I switch them. My magic is mainly enhancing but it isn't my specialty. Please do take care of me!" (Yuno)

Just like Yuno said, she has a short build. She probably is around 1.5m. It makes me doubt her use of spear and bow even more. The bows in this world are mostly big after all. But since she not only wrote it in the petition and actually said it in her introduction as well, it is probably not a lie… Yeah.

Could it be that she matches them with the party depending on the situation? It isn't like she can walk around with both of them, so that must be it. She is skillful, and seems to be an energetic one. She has the same blond hair as her older sister, but just like if displaying her personality, her hair is cut short enough so that it doesn't reach her shoulders.

"Nice to meet you. I have transferred from Fosk Royal Academy, my name is Karen Frost. It hasn't been long since I transferred, so I would be glad if you teach me. My race is hyuman. My specialties, I don't really have any; I am a jack of all trades. In terms of magic, earth is the one I am the best at, but I can use the other elements decently. Please do take care of me" (Karen)

…

Hyuman huh.

While hearing Karen's self-introduction, I check the reactions of the other students. There wasn't that much difference compared to the Rembrandt sisters. Actually,

at the time of the sisters, I could see that the five of them looked more nervous. It is probably because of their previous reputation of having a bad personality. Jin, it may seem off-putting for you, but that expression is rude to the sisters you know?

Even so, this Karen girl…

She is using magic to change her appearance. That's why she is being accepted by the other students without any discomfort. In my eyes, her appearance is completely different from that of a hyuman.

When I looked at Shiki, he seemed to have noticed my confusion and nods. Shiki and I can tell, so that means it is practically without a doubt an illusion type of spell. I don't know if she is using it herself or is the effect of some sort of tool though.

Even if I question Karen here, it will only be a waste of one class and it isn't like I am being troubled by it right now. After the class ends or if she is unable to, I will just ask her if she has some time today after all her plans are done to have a detailed talk. If she just wants to honestly take my class then I have no problems. It will probably be something troublesome though.

[And that's how it is, do treat them well. Also, Rembrandt sisters, let me tell you this first, just because I am friends with your father doesn't mean I will go easy on you, so take that in mind]

After the other five introduced themselves as well, I have the three of them return to the group. It would be a matter of time for them to learn that we are acquainted,

so I will just tell them straight. The two of them answer me clearly in return. Yeah, they are nice girls, I think.

[Now then, as planned, for today's lecture I have an enjoying subject. But, as expected, the stimulus would be too high for the three new students. That's why we will be splitting the group in two. Now then, Sif, Yuno and Karen stay here in standby. The others come here]

I leave the explanation for the three to Shiki and I lead the five to a place a bit away. I will leave Shiki in charge here, but at the end I will have to take lead.

The expressions of the five are stiff. Tense and concentrated.

"Sensei, what are we doing today?"

It's Jin. Even though he says that everything is set by one's ability, he seems to have a personality that attracts people and is the one that's acting as leader. His way of talking is severe, but in the end he is an attentive person. Our ages are the same, so if our meeting was different, we could have become good friends.

[Its real combat training]

"Could it be, against sensei?!"

The face of the five magnificently cramp.

[No. I will have you fight with a summoned being. Don't worry, if you go at it with the desire to kill, you won't die. Life is unexpectedly that way. In the worst case scenario, Shiki will heal you so be relieved. Depending on the number of times you are defeated, the penalty will

increase]

“S-Summoned?”

[Yeah, I actually am able to do summoning]

Desperate words of “Isn’t this abuse?! Something like a lecture we will be defeated several times” and “Will I have to skip all the other lectures that I have next?” How rude. There’s no way I would do something that would bother the other teachers. Everyone will be able to attend to the next classes with your body healthy!

By the way “if you go at it with the desire to kill, you surprisingly won’t die” are the words of my sensei. The word surprisingly has passed through my mind several times. Now it has become a funny story… I have survived after all.

And so, after saying random words, I summon a mist gate and a hazy shadow appears inside the mist. A single mist lizard appears.

I can tell that the students are gulping their breath. Even low grade lizardmen are said to be a threat when in group. This one clearly has beautiful blue scales that are out of the norm, armed with a sword and shield along with light armor. They must have noticed that this lizardman is a strong foe. I am already used to seeing it, but those scales that shine with the light are truly beautiful.

“Uhm, this lizardman, I haven’t seen it anywhere before. Just how strong is it?”

N, the dagger boy. For him who has to fight the enemy in

close combat, the opponent's information must really interest him. But I refuse.

[It's a secret. After you fight him, each one of you will have to write a report of the information you managed to grasp. I will approve consulting with other classmates, but the wrong answers will return to you as minus points okay? Don't forget that the answers you submit are your own responsibility]

"Uhm, at least name of the race…"

The bow user Amelia. There's no way I will tell you right? In a school that has such an excellent library. There's probably no one who has seen the mist lizardmen, but that's not all there is to it.

[It's a secret. He is my friend, Blue Lizard-kun. Then, begin. Until Shiki returns, you can't go dying or no one will be able to save you, so be careful]

"I am counting on you today. Blaze is prohibited. Fight with them at 1% of your power please. It is okay to not hold back in the technical areas" (Makoto)

When I pass by the mist lizard, I whisper in his ear. He nodded slightly.

Leaving the sounds of life and death struggle of the students as BGM, I return to where Shiki-san and the other three are waiting.

[Shiki, how is the explanation going?]

"I have finished explaining the basic objectives of this class to those three and they are currently in standby.

Now then, I will be heading over to that side” (Shiki)

[I leave them to you]

“If I don’t hurry they might get seriously hurt, so I will excuse myself now” (Shiki)

Shiki makes a wry smile as he heads to the place where the life and death, no, the enjoying lecture is taking place. I won’t be doing that to you three yet, so rest assured.

[Now then. About you three who are participating in my classes from today on, I think you have already heard the explanation from my assistant Shiki. I will be brief here, increase the amount of elements you can use. Learn to activate spells faster. Learnto use those points efficiently and do the correct decisions in the correct time. That is the objective of my class]

“Learn to be skillful, is what you are trying to say?”

Karen summarizes what I said. Well, in short that’s it. But the word skillful is pretty broad.

[That’s right. I am not telling you to get rid of your strong points and become skillful, I am talking about improvingyour weak points as well as your strong ones. If it’s Sif: water, wind and darkness elements are the current tasks. In the case of Yuno, find easy to use elements and increase the amount of non-elemental magic. Karen, you say you are a jack of all trades so, everything. Obviously, increase the ability to use all those points effectively]

It seems like the three understood what I was trying to

say, they tensed up immediately.

[Today, you three will form a group and fight against me. Even if I say fight, it will be just you attacking me though. You are free to do whatever you want. In the middle of that, I will be giving you combat advice and tasks. As you can see, I communicate with writing, so make sure not to miss it. If you don't improve on the things I point out, I will break your attack on that second miss. Keep in mind that you will be wounded. Then, we will begin in 5 minutes. Prepare]

This is something the other students did as well. At the end, they made faces filled of despair. "Fix what I have pointed out" is not something that one can do as soon as they are told. After a while, they will not be able to do the same attack of what they weren't able to fix and slowly their cards will decrease to the point that they are zero. Predicting my students' attacks, the battle time and calculating the remaining time of the class is just… hard.

After 5 minutes.

Well, that's obviously how it would be. The position of the three are just as expected. No vanguard. If I won't be attacking anyways, there won't be anyone set in the vanguard because there's no one specialized in it.

[Come]

The short writing worked as the signal. From the three, Karen and Sif's arias begin. Their voices are loud. I can already predict the scale of the magic they will use. In exchange for power, they really sacrifice quite a lot.

Yuno quickly does the first attack. She shoots an arrow at me. So instead of the spear, she decided on the bow huh. She must have taken into account the chance of being caught in the magic. If the opponent were to counter attack, she would have probably chosen the spear to protect her sister.

The arrow flies to my collar. Her gaze was directed at my chest, so… that's quite the aim she has. It was only off by a bit. However, maybe because her physical strength is lacking, the power is low. Also, because it is a projectile, it isn't enhanced that much by magic power.

Of course, the arrow is stopped by my barrier and it didn't hit me.

"Eh?!"

[The power is weak. Not even worth the words. Put more strength in it. If you are aiming at my chest, don't miss at such a distance]

Well, the attacks of her are arrows, so even if she does the same thing, it's just going to be stopped by my barrier. Let's try baking today.

The second attack. The strength increased, though it is still low. It seems there's a need to strengthen her muscles. Lookslike she is being desperate in imbuing magic power to the arrow, and because of that, the strengthening in her body is negligent. Like that, it won't work in the wasteland. Well, just because her house is close doesn't mean that the princesses of Rembrandt will be fighting in the wasteland though.

She shoots again.

“Uh?!”

[Think of body strengthening and magic power imbuing as a set. In the next one I will burn]

Before the magic is shot, Yuno’scards might be gone. In that case, she would probably have to use a spear.

Oh, magic. Sif and Karen huh.

It looked like Karen would be able to put together the magic faster, but maybe she matched her speed with Sif’s on purpose. Simultaneous attacks are harder to deal with after all. Of course, the spells interfere with each other, so I can’t say it is always good.

If she aimed for that when she shot it, she must have quite the confidence in her skills.

“Ray!”

“Frost Break!”

Fire and water huh. Karen, if you did that aiming to match, then you are quite the challenger.

However, both magic’s mechanism and composition are practically confirmed, so I can tell what spell they will use.

The one Sif released is a heat ray, I think. This spell’s objective is most likely to pierce the enemy. And even if stopped, it looks like it would explode.

Karen’s magic probably freezes a radius around its target

and breaks. This time she activated it after Sif spell huh. What's gathering around me is most likely the chill from Karen's spell.

I receive Sif's spell with a barrier. I can tell that it is accumulating power. Explosion. Just as expected. The wave that was on the level of soft wind caresses my face. When blocking with a partial barrier, there's no helping that I will be hit by the byproducts.

Karen's spell is completed in the perfect timing. Splendid! It's like this isn't the first time they have matched their spells. She has good sense.

With a high-pitched noise, I get enclosed in a case of ice.

To be more precise, I was wrapped by ice after I took a little distance from it. When I look, I see that Yuno is drawing her bow close to the limit and holding off shooting. Good. She is trying to aim the best she can so she doesn't waste the shot.

[Well done. The timespan is Karen's sense huh, quite impressive. You tookinto account Sif's explosion and used it as blinding, nice thinking. About the task, it would be Sif's speed]

Even though I was in the middle of explaining, the cage of ice reacted to Karen's voice and broke flashily.

[About Sif, it would be speed. It would be good if you can increase the speed of your heat ray, or make it pursue. About Karen, it would be the change in the surroundings that tells the enemy of its activation and its power. If that's something that's not activated directly to

the target but in a space where the target is, it would be hard to hit. And even if you manage to hit, the power is just low]

“To block everything with that small barrier!”

“… Even though I hid the change in the surroundings and the power was also good”

[Yuno. I did say that I would destroy the attack that I have already pointed out right? If you can’t do anything else anymore, just bring out the spear. If you prepare properly, you can also attack me from the back]

I burn the arrow that Yuno shot thinking I was open. It wasn’t blocked by my barrier, it just burned in the middle of air.

“N-Not yet!”

“Next time for sure!”

“Maybe I should get a bit more serious”

It will probably be a complete defeat for Sif, Yuno and Karen. But I think that setbacks are best to be experienced early and recovered.

If you are motivated to do it again, come back next week.

Without holding back, I continue to block the attacks of the three, destroy them and point out their faults.

Chapter 99: Lunch Together In Gotetsu

[Now then, today's lecture ends. Make sure not to be late to your next class]

I announce the end of the lecture to the 5 corpses and 3 cripples. Iyaaa, we really messed them up today~. In my side, at the last 5 minutes the three of them were in a state where they could practically do nothing.

In the side where Shiki was watching, the mist lizard left them completely beat up. It has to do with their inexperience in real combat, but I received a report that they were wiped out 4 times. That means they stopped the fight 4 times and had to do it again, and even with that they were still beat up. I hope Blue Lizard-kun has not become a trauma. I will have him release his limiter in the future and have them fight him occasionally. Do your best. There's still more than 10 battles left with Blue Lizard-kun.

[Ah, Karen Frost. I have some business with you. I want to hear what plans you have after this]

"T-Today I only have sensei's class"

Even when she is tired, she didn't make me wait and answered quickly. So she is finished for today huh. To have only one class in the morning, how refined. But that's convenient. In the morning I thought about calling out the students that had free time and have lunch with them, but this time let's just invite Karen, and along with Shiki, we three will have lunch together. About the

Rembrandt sisters, it's fine to just call them to my office to greet them.

[That's great. There's one thing that's been in my mind you see]

"T-There's still more?!" (Karen)

[Yeah. Luckily, it seems you have time as well. Keep me company]

"… Y-Yes" (Karen)

Good.

After confirming her will, I left the field dragging Karen along with me. Normally, after the reflection meeting, it would be tempering until the last minute. Today I finished a bit early.

The group of five are pretty weakened after all.

Saying it like this is probably not the best way, but I think that they want to gossip. I could somehow tell from their eyes. Actually, the supposedly kind Shiki reports everything to me.

Well, complain as much as you want. Next week will be fun lecture again after all.

Karen probably noticed the smile that appeared in my face. Her body trembled.

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"Shiki-san! Geez, I thought I would finally rise to heaven!"

“Lizardscarylizardscarylizardscary”

“What is that Lizardman?! He avoids like crazy, is fast, strong, hard! In the report shouldn’t I just write that everything is awesome and that’s aaaall?!”

“That’s already… a dragon”

“Then is that person a dragon summoner? No, it isn’t at that cute level. If I were asked which I want to choose as an enemy, I would not hesitate in choosing a dragon summoner”

“Oane-cha～n”

“Yuno, don’t make such a pitiful voice. This was outside my expectations… Probably because it is Raidou-sensei!”

Yareyare. It has become exactly as Makoto-sama said.

Seeing the students, I sigh internally.

From what I saw, the mist lizard was holding back quite a lot. His equipment was not what he usually uses and its water blaze was not used either. There wasn’t even a shred of that quick-wittedness they normally use. Their strongest point which is group battles is, of course, not there either.

Bluntly speaking, he was on the same level as the weak mamonos in the wasteland. And yet, 5 young ones that are said to have bright prospects came at him with all five and were wiped out 4 times. Seriously, how deplorable.

Makoto-sama had already predicted that they would be

completely beat up, but even if not to the point of suddenly clearing it, I actually thought that they would put up a good fight at least. It seems that, even if it was an order of Makoto-sama, as I acted kind in front of them, I ended up being too lenient in my assessment of them. I have to reflect on this.

It seems that Mio-dono is taking longer than expected in her investigation on counter-measures for forced summoning, so I have to lend a hand in that area, and yet, what a troublesome bunch are these kids. Regarding Mio-dono, our current state of affairs isn't that favorable. I-I don't want the skin peeling punishment anymore… Even talking about it is scary.

"Well, calm down. Even with that, Raidou-sama is actually holding back quite a lot you know? It isn't set as a wall you wouldn't be able to overcome. I assure you of that" (Shiki)

"That's definitely a lie! Shiki-san, no matter how I think of it, Raidou-sensei is definitely having fun with this!" (Jin)

"Jin, you say so, but the moves you showed were not the same as usual you know? The enemy is a monster, moreover, one that possesses strength superior to most. Weren't you pretty nervous there?" (Shiki)

Nervous, or more like withered. Even though the Mist Lizard didn't use his coercing shout. How inexperienced.

"That is… certainly true. That may be true but…" (Jin)

"Well, it is true that Raidou-sama is strict. That's just how

much he is expecting of all of you. For me, seeing how he treats you all makes me a bit jealous" (Shiki)

"Shiki-san, you were the type that gets heated up when bullied? Then I too…" (Amelia)

"That's not it Amelia. It's just that, it's been a long time since that person has expected something from me. Seeing how he presents tasks to you kids continuously, I was probably feeling a bit of envy" (Shiki)

He always gives words of thanks to me, but the amount of tasks Makoto-sama has given me are low. If I was told that isn't the kind of connection we have, that would be it, but seeing my master interacting with the students, there are times when I feel a bit jealous.

The complains that come from everyone's mouth about Makoto-sama's lectures, I in times scold them, correct, soothe, sympathize or comfort them, while healing them. I have already gotten used to this work. Today is a lot more prominent than usual as expected though.

However, from the Rembrandt sisters that have joined us recently, I haven't heard any such complains. They should have been driven the feeling of frustration by Makoto in their first participation though?

The two of them have calmed their breathing and were now inspecting their equipment.

"Sif-san and Yuno-san. How was it? Do you think you can continue?" (Shiki)

"Ah, ehm. Shiki-san, was it? It's okay. Yuno and I will be coming again next week" (Sif)

“Yeah. It begins from now on after all! I am definitely continuing!” (Yuno)

Oya, how surprising. It seems there’s no need for a follow. “It seems that Makoto is strong” Is what their eyes are telling. Their will has not been broken. Anyways, if they don’t have a lukewarm personality, then it will be more comforting for me.

Umu, the rumors said their personalities were troublesome, but that just can’t be relied on huh. Like this, it seems like it will be worth teaching them.

It might be in a future, but there will probably be a time when Makoto-sama and I will meet these girls as the daughters of our partnered company, so I think we will be able to create a good connection. Ah that’s right. It would be a good idea to know the place those two are living. Makoto-sama probably went directly to Gotetsu.

When I check, the five of them were already gathered up and began the analysis of their opponent. What troublesome kids. Looking at this, I feel like they are totally planning to not come to the next lecture.

“I also want to hear Sif-san and Yuno-san’s opinion. Is that alright?” (Amelia)

Amelia invites the two. Even though they didn’t fight him directly, she probably wants to know about the impression the mist lizard gave from a different point of view. She is not thinking about how it is a bother for the two, but well, I welcome ambition.

The coiled up feeling those five had before the lecture

was now gone. One reason may be because they were beaten hard. I don't think this will open up their hearts completely, but it could be a trigger to fortify their connections. To prioritize what they currently require instead of doing bad gossip is most likely something that comes with youth.

"Yeah. If we are okay for you, then certainly!" (Sif)

"It's great that we left the next slot of time open just in case right, Onee-chan!" (Yuno)

I see, so they prepared a counter-plan for the lecture that is rumored to be harsh. But really, they are truly straightforward that is funny. If they are still evil people after all this, then I can only consider them as the best actors of all. It is probably the rumors that are wrong.

The real discussion of Makoto-sama's fun lecture began. Makoto-sama told me not to give them advice, so I can only stay silent. To be ambitious is something I think is likeable in a pupil. Seeing the hatchlings trying to look at what's above is praiseworthy.

If that's the case, it can't be helped. Even though Makoto-sama cautioned me about it, I will turn a blind eye this one time. About the participation in the next lecture, I will leave it as if I didn't see anything either.

Without saying anything, I leave and finish my business in the staff room before heading to where I would be meeting with Makoto-sama.

From here on it will probably be an unsavory story. Even I can tell that I am trying to make a strong smile. That

woman, just what kind of objective did she have when she came to this Academy?

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[It's here]

I lead her to Gotetsu. Because it has just opened, there are nopeople here yet. At 1 o'clock people that are coming for lunch will begin to flow in here, so this is like the calm before the storm.

It would have been fine to take her to the Kuzunoha Company, but since it is like a base of sorts, I didn't want to just suddenly bring an unknown factor. So I decided to bring her to Gotetsu which is the place we previously planned to come eat lunch.

When Shiki finishes his follow up with the students and investigates the address of the Rembrandt sisters, it will be exactly lunch. Nabe changes its taste as time passes, so let's pass on ordering until he arrives here. If we finish eating before he comes, it would be wrong.

I use [Sakai] to set up a soundproof area. With this, there's no fear of our conversation leaking outside.

Hmph~, it seems that she didn't notice that I deployed a [Sakai]. I see, so she can't detect [Sakai].

This woman student, I checked her documents again and have confirmed it. As expected, she is suspicious.

"Raidou-sensei, please begin talking about why you brought me here. Did you find a point you were interested in?" (Karen)

Karen had a face full of exhaustion, but right now she has a calm mask that one wouldn't be able to tell she is exhausted and is looking straight at me. It is actually impossible to recover from mental fatigue in such a short amount of time, so it is clear that she is pushing herself. Maybe she just has that kind of skill trained in her body unlike others of her age, I think.

Also, the skills of her. Comparing her to the people I have met in the Academy, she is top class. No, thinking of her as a student is just too weird. That coordination with a person she is still not used to, and the power of her spell and speed. I tried bringing it out while I crushed and provoked her, but she probably hasn't shown me everything. That is an awfully heretic attitude to Jin and the others who I am teaching to and this Academy. The fact that she is "hiding her true strength". Shiki also threw me a short thought transmission saying "be careful". He probably knows something about this girl.

I think that I brought out a decent amount of her skills in that lecture. At the latter half she seemed to have become a bit worked up. She set several things up while making sure it wasn't noticed by the sisters. Even in a state where she was trying to hide her true strength, she let a part leak out.

[Actually, I can't help but feel like your real ability is unnatural]

"My ability?" (Karen)

[Yeah. It isn't in the level of a student. Not only that, the magic was clearly used in a manner accustomed to real combat]

“I am a military magician at my country. I have participated in several subjugation missions. If you doubt me, you can ask the details to a related party” (Karen) <I have over 300 confirmed kills>

Without hesitating, Karen talks about her personal history. She talks of the kingdom army that has an unnecessarily long name with a pride filled voice.

Her personal history itself may actually exist for real. She talks of it with so much confidence after all. It depends on how long she has been planning this and at what scale it is though.

This is what I think but, probably, the personal history of the one called Karen Frost is already not in this world anymore. And that maybe she is impersonating her by using her appearance.

Replacing.

Infiltrate into the country, get promoted, enter Royal Academy, become a soldier and transfer into Rotsgard. Instead of creating such a personal history, I think it would be easier to just replace a person who has that kind of history. Especially when that person is from a faraway place.

[I am doubting that you are really Karen Frost. I have read the personal history of Karen Frost. Just as you said, because of a sudden situation, you have experience in the military and that you hold that position even in present]

“Even though you know that much, why are you doubting? I am the genuine Karen Frost. Ah, could it be,

sensei is saying that to try and learn a lot about me? If that's the case then I…"

[As expected, strange. Would someone normally act like that after being doubted? Wouldn't they show more anger?]

I ignore Karen's words. It isn't like I care about the life of a single hyuman. It's just that having her act that way in that appearance feels just like she is mocking the deceased. It makes me feel a bit angered.

There's the chance that all my conjectures are wrong. But the attitude of her is practically in the black.

"It's just that it is such an absurd thing to say that I don't even feel like getting angry" (Karen)

[A sudden campaign deploy. Did you get involved with Karen Frost at that point in time?]

"Fufu, sensei. Your strength was certainly strong, but I didn't think that you were the type that keeps talking about incomprehensible things. I won't be coming to sensei's class anymore. I don't need lunch either. Excuse me" (Karen)

While holding a calm expression, Karen stands up from the opposite sit.

[Karen, are you not interested in why I doubted you of not being the real person?]

Wouldn't one normally want to know the reason why someone has doubted your identity? Would they just leave without asking? And yet, she not only didn't pursue

the subject, but also tried to avoid the topic in itself, is what I feel. Even now she is trying to escape.

She doesn't seem like she is angered one bit and her face could be taken as vague while trying to smile. She was lenient at first, but this may be a technique in negotiations.

"… Certainly. Thinking that I am a completely different person just because my skills are unnatural does feel pretty rash. Are you going to tell me the reason?" (Karen)

Of course. I was intending do so since I went through the trouble of inviting you to lunch.

[Because the appearance you are trying to hide is completely visible to me]

"Fufu, you see the real me? Are those love words?" (Karen)

[It means exactly what I am saying]

"Sorry, you may have taken the trouble to, but I must refuse your confess-" (Karen)

[Even if you don't have a horn, that blue skin, just what business does a demon have in the Academy?]

Karen's words stop mid-sentence. Because of the surprise, she instantly opened her eyes wide. That she soon made an enticing smile must be to smooth it over. In Tsige and Academy Town there were actually several times when spies wanted to try entering our Kuzunoha Company. At that time, Tomoe-sensei and Shiki-sensei taught them various things in practice. Even now, when I am

receiving a friendly smile like this, I feel like there's some sort of ulterior motive. This is something I myself think though. It seems to be because they don't want the target to notice their agitation and are trying to compose themselves secretly.

G-Great. She probably won't be escaping in the middle of it now. It seems like I can buy sufficient time for Shiki to come. It would have probably been better to have obediently eaten first. I was pretty nervous inside.

"Please don't joke. What part of me looks like a demon?" (Karen)

Karen makes a turn to show me. But as long as that spell isn't affecting me, she will still look like a blue person.

[Everything. Your blue skin, red eyes. Hair is blond. Semi long. I don't see a hyuman at all. Let me say this first, half-assed illusions don't work on me]

"…"

[You killed Karen and replaced her. Is that how it is? Hornless demon]

"…"

Without saying a word, Karen reacts slightly to the latter half of my writing. The muscles in her face trembled lightly, or so it looked like. In that case…

[I want you to answer my question, hornless demon]

"… To think that I would be found out this fast… moreover, so straightforwardly. Raidou huh. What a

strange teacher there is" (Karen)

[You admit it right?]

"Yeah. I don't intend to tell you my objective, but I am not Karen Frost. You are right. But…" (Karen)

[What?]

"Don't call me hornless ever again. I will kill you" (Karen)

The woman demon that had taken off the mask of Karen, I could see something slightly blurry coming out from her contours. She probably stopped her camouflage. And an intense killing intent was shot out. It is somewhat easier to take than Sofia's, but well, I think that I am just not good at dealing with the anger of a woman.

I was raised in a family where the women were strong, so my weakness isn't something I can correct at this point in time. I can't just push it away, so for now let's just ignore it.

[Is Karen already…?]

"Yeah, just as you have inferred. But the one who did it wasn't me. This was the deed of the companions of Karen. I just found the personal history of her convenient so took the chance" (Karen)

[I see, her companions. Karen Frost is a pitiful one]

I actually didn't have that much interest in how that girl died. It was just as I deduced, but I am not even acquainted with Karen anyways. For hyumans to kill

other hyumans isn't something that unusual. In the modern times it was pretty much the same.

There was no need to ask. I can imagine why the demon in front of me was at a place like that. Hyumans and demons are in war after all.

"Ara, you are unexpectedly cold. Well, the girl called Karen was called a prodigy, but on the other hand, she seemed to have stir a good amount of grudges. Ne, can I ask you something as well? Are you hyuman?" (Karen)

[I don't know the reason for that question but, yes, I am indeed a hyuman]

"Heh~ hyuman huh~… Well, there are a lot of types. But how unusual. After seeing a demon you guys would normally stare at me with bloodshot eyes" (Karen)

[I…]

Aaah, how bothersome!

"I am in the side that's against racial discrimination. Even if they have blue skin it doesn't matter, as long as they can exchange their thoughts it isn't any different from a person after all" (Makoto)

"?!! You… can use the language of demons?! But, the word 'racial discrimination side' is a word I first hear. Judging from your words, you mean that as long as you can exchange a conversation the outer appearance doesn't matter, right?" (Karen)

"Well, yeah, something like that. And so, how should I call you? Please spare me from the name Karen. That's

the name of a deceased person after all. I still want to hear a few things more, so please give me a name" (Makoto)

"There's… no need for that"

The woman narrows her eyes looking a bit sad. It can even be seen as pity. From her sudden change of expression and her lowering of shoulders, I unintentionally found that gesture as cute, in contrast to her usual seductiveness.

"…"

"For a hyuman to talk normally with a demon is quite, no, incredibly interesting for me, but, you can tell right? I have to eliminate you no matter what. You will get in the way of my work after all. That's why there's no need to tell you a name"

"That woman's name is Rona. She threw away her family name. She is one of the demon generals of the demon army, Raidou-sama"

"?!!"

"Shiki huh" (Makoto)

The killing intent that was filling up the room was erased by the voice of a third party. Just like dispersing the heat of summer by sprinkling water. That it was in an instant as well made me feel like it was exactly like sprinkling water. Rona who had confirmed Shiki's presence and words, quickly took a battle stance.

That was too late. But with this, it seems like we can

finally talk about a lot of things. That Shiki, he really did know her. Rona huh. That she threw away her family name and hornless, gives an impression of a mysterious woman. Wearing a school uniform with an adult body, I honestly can't see it as anything but cosplay and it makes it hard to fix my eyes. She is wearing it slightly pulled down so it makes me think that way even more.

And also, a demon general huh. This would be the first time I am face to face with a demon of the demon camp.

As expected, it was something troublesome.

In the room that has been filled with tension for a while now, Shiki's steps resound and he takes a sit. I was still in my sitting position. And Rona-san who tried to leave the room in her Karen form, is still standing.

Just as if she ran out of patience looking at Shiki's gaze, she makes a small sigh and takes her seat once again.

A strange lunch began in Gotetsu.

Chapter 100: The Request Of The Demon

“Kuzunoha Company… If I remember correctly, that’s the miscellaneous store that opened not too long ago. And it has a store in Tsige as well, no, a sub-branch right?” (Rona)

“You know well” (Makoto)

“Heh, so you say. Raidou, the image you give right now is really different from when you are using written communication you know? Which one is the real one?” (Rona)

“This one. Shiki, I am sorry but could you please put that Nabe a bit further away? The sweet smell is even reaching here. And so, Rona-san. What do you mean by “so you say”?” (Makoto)

“About knowing well. Even though my name is only known to a real few number of people. How can a company that was just made have higher intelligence gathering than a nation? Wa, this is delicious” (Rona)

“Oua!! Rona, you bastard! That was the one I was cooking up to eat!! Demons shouldn’t be eating blue things, that’s cannibalism!” (Shiki)

“Could you please not call me by my name so familiarly? Also, saying that eating blue things is equal to cannibalism, that’s a first. Ah, I will be taking this one too～. N? Deliciouuus!!” (Rona)

“It’s not like being red makes it okay!! Ooooh… You

bastard, do you want to make this your last meal?" (Shiki)

"Well well, calm down Shiki. It's okay to just order more. Ah, Rona-san. The bird meat over there is also ready to eat" (Makoto)

"Raidou, you really know your stuff. The seasoning is also the best~! Maybe I should learn how to make this before I return" (Rona)

"Raidou-samaaa…" (Shiki)

The Gotetsu private room is pretty chaotic.

Rona-san who obviously doesn't know the etiquette when eating Nabe, seems to have taken a liking to Nabe cuisine. Even so, it looks like Shiki and her… are not compatible. Shiki, even though you took the initiative and proposed to order and eat while discussing, why is it that you are the one suffering the most?

Even if you come crying to me, I can't do anything for you. It's okay to order more, so don't make such a pathetic voice.

Shiki seems to know Rona, but maybe because he doesn't want to reveal his identity, he hasn't told her what he was previously. In her eyes, Shiki is probably reflected as an enemy to be cautious of. That she is not showing it in her face is as expected.

"Haaah~ I ate well! It's been a while since I have been completely satisfied!" (Rona)

"Then, let's continue with the conversation" (Makoto)

“Conversation huh. You say so, but even trying to kill you would be hard in a 2 against 1, so aren’t I in a disadvantage? First of all, I probably want to more about Kuzunoha Company～” (Rona)

“Discussions that begin with both at the same standing are not that many you know? Moreover, Rona-san, you are used to it right?” (Makoto)

“Nomnom, that’s right Rona. Things like strategy, conspiracy, traps, tricks; aren’t those your areas of expertize?” (Shiki)

Shiki, so he finally got the chance to eat properly. He is not reading the mood though. The Nabe in Gotetsu is his soul food. Let’s consent for now.

“… Really, just how much do you know? You said we have a sub-branch in Tsige so… that means you have someone posted there?” (Makoto)

“Heh～, the demons’ plan has already advanced all the way to the wasteland? That’s something I have heard for the first time too” (Shiki)

Anyways, that we know the name is only because Shiki knew it and it isn’t like we have constructed our intelligence gathering power at that level. Tomoe seems to be doing some undercover stuff, so in the places close to the store, we are able to get a decent amount of information.

“Is the Kuzunoha Company an information organization of Aion?” (Rona)

So no comment on what we said huh.

Ah, Tsige was in outline a land affiliated to Aion right. The government officials that were dispatched every time were all so incompetent and the land was practically a self-government of merchants, so I didn't really remember. I felt like that place was ruled mainly by the merchant guild and the adventurer guild.

"No way. We are not affiliated to anything. Not to hyumans nor demons" (Makoto)

That's why I thought of making a store in Academy Town. This is the first time I have said this huh. I haven't talked to any demon related to the demon camp before, so the only thing I have said is that I have been doing business without being attached to any country. Rembrandt-san is probably more on the hyuman side. I actually sell to anyone and I don't think of making any differences depending on the race.

"You are hyuman, and yet you are not affiliated to hyumans? Do you understand what you yourself are saying, Raidou?" (Rona)

Rona-san showed slight bewilderment as she matches my gaze to search for my real intentions.

"You already have several hyumans following you on your side right? I don't think it is something to be so surprised about. It's just that I am more neutral than them though" (Makoto)

Several hyumans is a lie. I only know of Sofia.

"… Really, I give up. To think that a power already had more information than us, I didn't fathom that

possibility. So in the hyumans there's also people who think about strategy, tactics and plans huh. I thought it would take at least 50 years for you guys to understand the importance of information" (Rona)

50 years you say. Rona-san, hyumans are not monkeys. The war would already be over if that were the case.

From the times I read books in the library, I sometimes had the same kind of thoughts as her, so I can't refute her words completely.

"Hyumans come in many varieties. And so, to do business more freely and in this land where our first store is located, I wanted to know your objective for infiltrating here. I definitely would like to know" (Makoto)

"Raidou, please don't do such a scary face. Honestly, at this in point in time where our information is at a disadvantage, I just don't have the will the oppose you anymore" (Rona)

Completely taking off her combat mode, the school uniform cosplaying Onee-san places both elbows on the desk.

"You say that with a laudable face, but you are a fox woman that would not hesitate using charms, seductions or even drugs and dangerous magic. So Raidou-sama, don't let your guard down. Hm, tasty tasty. Even half-cooked can't be underestimated. What a true discovery" (Shiki)

"… Really. How hard to deal with. What? Does Kuzunoha Company have my personal history gathered up?" (Rona)

“I will leave it to your imagination. And so… well, I don’t have any proofs, but I am probably not an enemy of yours” (Makoto)

“… Just now you said that you were neutral right? I don’t think this is the case but, could it be that you are intending to become a merchant that will provide support to both hyumans and demons in the war to occur?” (Rona)

Rona-san’s eyes become a lot sharper. The blood thirst that had disappeared is once again lurking in the room. I see, a demon general huh. This woman is without doubt a general serving the demon lord. Leaving aside her behavior, loyalty to her own nation is something I personally like. My interest in the demons serving under the demon lord is welling up.

“We are not planning on providing weapons in the war” (Makoto)

Currently. Well, it’s not just that I don’t have plans to, but that I don’t really feel like doing that.

“I see” (Rona)

Nodding her head lightly, Rona, while leaving her elbows on the desk, intertwines both hands on her face, hiding her face as she lowers it.

The conversation stops. The sound of Shiki poking and eating Nabe is the only sound that rules the room.

Is she thinking of our relation in a positive way? Though it probably doesn’t go further than us being usable. Even so, I think that she is a woman that’s easier to talk to

than Sofia.

In this situation where she is misunderstanding our power is the best chance. Honestly speaking, I don't have the talking skills and abilities to properly negotiate with a person whose main occupation is being the head of information gathering. If it turns dangerous, I intend to tag Shiki.

I can only wait for her decision.

"… Fuh~. In short, Raidou also wants to sell things to the demons right? If I can become that foothold, I would be happy. But if I am planning to do something here, it would tarnish the business that has been going favorably. That's why you want to learn my objective" (Rona)

Exactly. Well, there's no hurries in selling things to the demons. I think it doesn't need to be in this occasion. What's important is the latter half. I don't want them to hinder us.

"Yeah, that's right" (Makoto)

"So that's really it huh. You don't care about the direction of the war or the damage to the country, only about being a hindrance to your business, right?" (Rona)

"… Right" (Makoto)

"I understand. I still can't believe you completely, but I have understood your intentions. Then right now it is important to first learn about each other right?" (Rona)

"Learn? But the information…" (Makoto)

What does she mean?

“Let me tell you this first Rona. If you connect bodies with Raidou-sama, you will regret it for the rest of your life. This is an honest warning thinking about your wellbeing. The catastrophe will probably come bite me as well, that’s why I will do my all to get in the way, so do take that in mind” (Shiki)

Shiki stops his chopsticks and looks at Rona-san with a dead serious face, telling her slow and detailed instructions.

Connecting bodies? Ah… so that’s what she meant by learning about each other.

“You intend to thoroughly continue calling me without honorifics huh, Shiki” (Rona)

“You have no reasons to call me without honorifics” (Shiki)

“I return those words right back at you. Geez. When I talked about learning, I didn’t mean our bodies. If that’s your wish, I don’t really mind though. I want to know about your strength and way of thinking, if only a bit. If the lectures are like that, it wouldn’t serve as reference right?” (Rona)

“Hah～. For you to not even notice a part of the abysmal power of Raidou-sama. Are you sexual frigid, wench?” (Shiki)

“Concretely speaking, what do you want us to do?” (Makoto)

I decide to just ignore Rona and Shiki's comedy play.

"You are free to believe me or not. The reason why I came here is…" (Rona)

◇◆◇◆◇◆◇◆

[And that's how it is. Lime, I am sorry but can you investigate?]

"With pleasure! I will quickly find information. It is actually a disgusting story. Well then…" (Lime)

Lime responds to my request immediately and leaves the room. Practically at the same time, two presences disappear. Must be the Forest Onis: Akua and Eris. It seems those girls will be joining the investigation as well.

"Doubting everything that woman says is the safest measure, Raidou-sama" (Shiki)

"Shiki. It seemed like you already knew her but, is she an acquaintance?" (Makoto)

"Yeah. She was mostly a person cooperating in information exchange with me. I don't know how many times I have been used and dragged into trouble" (Shiki)

Shiki's expression turns into one of anguish. Seeing him like that, he must have gone through quite a lot.

"Her type is probably similar to that of Mio-dono. I don't know the details but it seems that she has a big debt of gratitude with the demon lord. She has sworn loyalty to an abnormal level. Her strength doesn't compare to Mio-dono's, but just think of Rona's underhanded way of

thinking as something close to hers. Ah, keep this talk a secret from Mio-dono please" (Shiki)

An underhanded Mio that has an incredibly good brain?

I would give up. My heart would break without a doubt.

The man called the demon lord seems to be a person with a bigger vessel than me. From the fragmented information I have, I can already picture him as an excelling ruler. He is most likely an able man. N? There's the chance that the demon lord is a woman. Now that I think about it, I practically don't have information.

Also, Shiki. If you are going to tremble all over, you should try using another example. Well, it was actually a pretty easy to understand example.

"Rona-san huh. In the end, it seems that until this one matter is over, Karen Frost will continue attending the Academy" (Makoto)

"She will definitely be moving sneakily" (Shiki)

"I did tell her that Kuzunoha Company is out of bounds. But based on what you said, it is hard to believe in her" (Makoto)

"Yes. That woman tells lies as much as she breathes" (Shiki)

What kind of woman is that? To give out that answer with no hesitation.

"Just in case, could you try and predict her movements at all times?" (Makoto)

“That’s what I intended to do from the very beginning. It seems like she already returned to her lodging for today. That wench. She is perfectly relaxing without knowing that she is being observed” (Shiki)

“… Make sure to peek at her in a moderate manner okay? It is okay to just know her current location for now. Well then, let’s get some presents and go greet the Rembrandt sisters” (Makoto)

“Tto, that’s right. I will guide you there. Is it okay to just bring cut fruits as present? How about a bouquet of flowers…” (Shiki)

Ah right. I haven’t even told them I was visiting so maybe it would be better to have flowers?

I was planning on bringing cut fruits like when bringing a fruits basket as present, but thinking about it, these are products I manage at my store. It would turn to plain publicity.

No well, the fruitshave a good reputation so…

“Uhm, Raidou-sama” (Shiki)

“N?” (Makoto)

“If it’s fine with you, should I choose some suitable ones?” (Shiki)

“… Sorry. Please” (Makoto)

It seems like he instantly saw through what I was troubled about. Shiki, thanks for all.

After several minutes.

In the end, I brought the fruits and the bouquet of flowers that Shiki chose, and headed to their room.

“Hey Shiki, about the Rembrandt sisters’ room. Isn’t this inside the nobles’ dormitory?” (Makoto)

Moreover, a pretty high-class one. Rembrandt-san dotes on her daughter quite a lot.

“Yeah. It seems so” (Shiki)

“The people in the staff room told me a lot that “even if I am a temporary teacher, doesn’t mean you can visit them”. If it were a normal student it would be one thing, but…” (Makoto)

“… I did my best” (Shiki)

D-Did your best?

“You did your best huh” (Makoto)

“Yes. On the level that doesn’t leave after-effects. It was a really bone rending task” (Shiki)

“…”

Let’s leave it as if I didn’t hear anything.

After revealing my position as a temporary teacher, I am standing at the entrance of the sisters’ lodging with my permission to visit confirmed. Creeping in would obviously be a bad idea after all. It is only to celebrate their return to school and it is no surprise either.

The two of them live in the same room and it is already confirmed that both of them are there. I explained my reason for this visit to the people in charge. The landlady-san made a bitter face as we entered the nobles' dormitory and safely arrived in front of their room.

When I knocked, I heard some rattling noises and the steps got closer.

The door opened.

[Sif-san, Yuno-san. I am truly sorry about not being able to visit you when you were ill. I already introduced myself in the class but let me do so again. I am the merchant that your father is assisting, Raidou. That you are now completely healthy, allow me to congratulate you. It may be late, but this is a congratulatory gift from our part]

For now, I write what I was thinking of and congratulate them for their recovery, and also make a light self-introduction again.

They receive the cut fruits in a slightly big container and the bouquet of flowers from Shiki.

The two of them have already taken off their uniforms and are in normal clothes. The designs differ from each other. The two of them were dressed in a one piece that was probably made for both to have an opposite design. It looks expensive.

The sisters who received the fruits and bouquet with a full smile, strongly invited us to enter the room and we ended up intruding in their room. I didn't really mind. As

long as I gave them what I came to give and gave my greeting, I didn't really need to enter…

"Raidou-sensei, your personality is totally different compared to when you are in class" (Sif)

"Yeah. That surprised me!" (Yuno)

When we sat down on the sofa that we were invited to, the two of them retort to me from the opposite side.

[Lectures are a place where one comes to study and gain power after all. I unconsciously become strict. I have always been helped by my assistant Shiki to appease them. That I am interacting with you two like this, please keep it a secret from the other students]

I can't tell them that I am doing the carrot and stick after all. And if they tell them to other people, it would be troublesome in a lot of ways.

"Shiki-san, right? I have heard of Tomoe-san and Mio-san from father, but have you been with Raidou-sensei since long?" (Sif)

"Yes. I have been serving Raidou-sama since a long time ago. It's just that the trip to Tsige was unexpected, so I was unable to visit Tsige" (Shiki)

Just like we previously arranged, Shiki tells them about the setting we created. Of course, we were expecting the two to ask Shiki, so we thought of it beforehand.

Luckily, they didn't pursue the subject further and the older sister Sif readied tea while the little one Yuno took out pastries.

The two of them are level-headed. Taking the tea offered, we have a brief pause. The two sisters look at each other and nod slightly.

“I am Sif the eldest daughter of Tsige’s merchant, Rembrandt. Raidou-sama, to have saved our lives at that time. I can’t find words to express my gratitude. This favor we will never forget and will edge it in our hearts. We want to repay you” (Sif)

“Same here, Yuno. Just like my older sister, it is thanks to Raidou-sama that we are here healthy now. If in the future there’s something we are able to do, please don’t hesitate to ask” (Yuno)

…

They are thanking me to a dangerous level! Even the little sister put in order her tone and said an incredible thing with a serious face!

Their fight against the deadly curse illness must have cornered those girls a lot. Even now I am having Lime find the people under curse illnesses and creating medicines. A curse that makes you ill and eventually kills you. I really think that’s not something that can be forgiven.

[Okay then, you two. From now on you will live for the sake of happiness. That will be my repayment. Also, no Raidou-sama. We are student and teacher, so call me sensei or use –san]

“… Eh?”

I thought that they might be brooding a lot over that

subject. That's why I thought of an answer just in case this happened. Since the time I was in Tsige.

They were finally released from the curse disease, but if they are tied up by responsibility next, it would be pointless. So I decided to tell them to live their lives happily.

I don't know if my answer was unexpected for the two or if my immediate response surprised them, but the two of them looked dumbfounded.

[Those are the words of your life savior, so please keep that promise. Don't underappreciate me just because my face is ugly got it? The two of you were pretty "that" when you were ill after all]

"P-Please don't touch that subject! We already know that sensei saw an appearance of us that is more embarrassing than being naked!" (Sif)

"Uh, that was certainly worse than being naked…" (Yuno)

They were practically ghouls after all. I remember that Rembrandt-san wanted to make a portrait of her wife and daughter while they were recovering in celebration. Even I thought that was insensitive but, just what happened to that?

[Now that I think about it, your father said that he wanted to leave a memory of the recovery of you three]

"… Sensei, father has already seriously reflected on that foolish action"

“… Sensei, he was punished along with Morris who made an error in your entry documents from student to teacher you know?”

Ah, how scary. These sisters are probably scary.

Their tone lowered. Just by hearing their voice, I felt a chilling cold.

My instincts told me that I shouldn’t know about what happened, so I decided to not ask about the details of the punishment. His wife and daughters probably did something. But I won’t ask.

I am also involved in it, so I better not touch on that incident. There are things that one can’t turn into a laughing matter even if time passes.

[A… Ahaha. I see. Well, I don’t really mind. Now then, Shiki. We should leave soon]

“Yes, Raidou-sama” (Shiki)

He didn’t talk at all in the conversation and just acted as an assistant. For that I am grateful.

I give my thanks to the two kind girls who were sad that we were leaving already, and left the nobles’ dormitory.

“Raidou-sama, about those two…” (Shiki)

“What?” (Makoto)

“Even though they are wealthy among hyumans, I felt like they didn’t have much attachment to outward appearance. I also saw that their gratitude for Raidou-

sama is the real deal. And that kind treatment to guests, I feel like this is my first time seeing a normal hyuman" (Shiki)

Certainly. I feel like my current students only fear me, but you are already treating Lime who was influenced by Tomoe as abnormal?

"There was a time when their own outward appearance become terrible because of the curse disease after all. They probably changed their way of thinking and are now people that take more importance in what's inside" (Makoto)

"No matter which, it is something to be happy about. Those two will surely grow" (Shiki)

"Shiki-sensei's approval? They are rookies with a bright future" (Makoto)

While doing frivolous talk, Shiki and I return.

The next morning.

Contact with Lime Lattewas cut off.

Chapter 101: Imperfect Combustion

Normally, Lime would have returned before the store's opening to clean, but he has yet to come back.

Not only that, last night in the area where he was supposed to be, I found traces of a fight.

Even though Akua and Eris came back as if nothing happened. Could it be he was the only one that went to that dangerous place? But I didn't receive such a report.

I confirmed Rona-san's movements with Shiki, but it seems that last night there was no movements from her.

"Lime-san said that he would visit the merchant guild later and after that return here though" (Eris)

"There were no orders of killing enemies and the fight looks unnatural. That person would first run. And then tail it" (Akua)

I have never given such an order before, Akua. Also, I don't have any intent to retort to your words anymore. It would be another story if theyare thinking about doing war, but the Forest Onis are basically moving as an investigation corp. The site of the fight where Lime seems to have disappeared, is certainly on the way to the merchant guild where Lime and the two had separated. Even if he were suddenly attacked, he isn't so weak as to be defeated so easily. He would clash blades while trying to run away, then tail the enemy and report to me. That person is capable of that.

In that case, it is hard to believe it but, there's the possibility that it was an opponent that didn't let him escape. Was there someone so capable that recently entered this land? If it's the pattern where a merchant employed them exclusively, then it wouldn't be strange that adventurers enter this town.

Leaving the store to the dwarfs, we were at the second floor gathered up. We can only stay like this when we have urgent business. We can't have the dwarfs attending the store by themselves after all. I will have Akua and Eris return soon. In any case, if Lime was captured or defeated, then with the ability of these two, the chances of them being defeated as well is high.

I think it is better for Shiki and me to be the ones mobilizing.

That I can still stay calm even when Lime is in danger is, not because he is a hyuman and I don't care, but because after seeing the remains of the battle site, Shiki said that he is probably alive. Of course, I don't intend to just blindly believe that and search carefree. I intend to save him as fast as possible. Even if he didn't die in the battle, it doesn't mean that he is still okay. Just that, since he was kidnapped, it must mean that person has some sort of objective, so we should have time.

"Raidou-sama, it seems that we have probably been had" (Shiki)

"… There were no movements from Rona-san right?" (Makoto)

"Yeah. But this situation matches with the story I heard

before about the thought transmission jamming and the ring that suppresses blessings. A strange flow of power. It seems like he wasn't allowed to establish contact. This kind of technique, I think only demons can use it" (Shiki)

"Ah, that. So there are remains of it being used. There are a number of people who have infiltrated this lands aside from Rona-san and she used those hidden cards to pick a fight with us?" (Makoto)

"I think there's that possibility. If it's her, she would be able to do things like that while having a handshake" (Shiki)

"… Is there anything else that can tell us his location?" (Makoto)

"I have found the magic power of a person of interest. The Academy's librarian, Eva. For some reason, the magic power of her was in the scene" (Shiki)

Eva-san. It is certainly a person I didn't expect. That isn't a place a librarian like her would be walking in the middle of the night.

We are somewhat acquainted. But since the time I met her, she has only shown me her front as a librarian and Ruria's sister. In times it even feels unnatural. It looked like she was fond of rumors though.

I didn't really feel any doubts of her. If there were any doubts, it would be when I first met her…

"Eva-san huh. I don't think she would be able to catch Lime off guard, but if she was unrelated to the case and was killed because of her curiosity, then it would be

pitiful” (Makoto)

In the first place, that girl who likes to silently read books, has a strange attachment to rumors. But those kind of girls were in my high school as well. The type that has her antenna up the whole time. The type that would definitely get dragged into something in time.

In the current state where we haven’t shown a single one of our cards, I honestly don’t feel like Rona-san would make a move though…

“As expected, it isn’t a situation where we can come to a conclusion yet. I also can’t help but think that this is the work of demons. Let’s have Akua and Eris return to the store while Raidou-sama and I try returning to the scene” (Shiki)

“… You are right. Let’s try going to the Academy’s abandoned section” (Makoto)

When Shiki proposed that idea, the phrase “scene hundred times” surfaced in my mind. Looking for traces of the culprit.

The place where Lime disappeared, is in a street that extended from the Academy grounds to the Merchant Guild. The section was originally unused and it was a street with almostno uses, so the popularity of it was practically nil.

But he was investigating the inside of the Academy grounds. The popular abandoned building that is no longer used. Correctly speaking, an area that has been scheduled for redevelopment and is prohibited the entry.

If we are going to be investigating, that is the place to go to.

“For now, let’s begin from the actual spot. We might be able to find something new” (Makoto)

“Understood. In that case, Akua and Eris return to the store. We will probably be late, so if there’s any visitor, hear their business and tell them we will contact them at a later time” (Shiki)

“Have a safe trip”

Send off by the two employees, Shiki and I left to search for our disappeared comrade.

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“… Are you okay, Ne-chan?”

“I don’t want to hear that from someone who just woke up. I am okay for now though”

“I am glad to hear that. And, can you please tell me the current situation?”

“I was planning on releasing you who was defeated by that person. But a different group came after and I was treated as a comrade of yours. And, that’s how it turned out like this. It is probably already morning. Unreported absence. Please give me a break”

“Ah, you were a librarian right? If I remember correctly, you said your name was Eva-san? Well, don’t get so worried about being absent from work once or twice”

“…”

“I-I messed up huh. To have been defeated, how pathetic. I don’t have my katana either. I can’t face Sis and Boss now”

“… Wait” (Eva)

“An?”

“Why do you know my name? And even my job” (Eva)

“Ah. I am Lime Latte. An employee of Kuzunoha Company. You are an acquaintance of Raidou-sama right? In that case, I know at least your face. As an employee” (Lime)

While making a light self-introduction, my eyes finished grasping the surroundings. A prison. And judging from the confined air, this is underground. There’s a sour smell and I can feel the presence of small beings all around the place. There’s probably bugs crawling around. The persons in here are me and the librarian woman. This is the woman that Boss asked to investigate just in case. For now, I don’t have any definitive proofs, but based on my intuition, this woman is planning something. I also don’t know the reason why she was in such a place yesterday. It is at least not a route where people walk at night. She is trying to hide her uneasiness by maintaining a calm face, but she isn’t that composed. It seems like this woman is weak to bugs. And yet, she is just clearing her ears and even when she feels their presence, she isn’t distracted. I can’t see disgust either. I can tell that she is quite uneasy on the inside.

I check my whole body. The katana that was more important than my life and most of my equipment has been confiscated. Deciding that I should get them back at all cost, I confirm the equipment that is still fine. It seems like a number of items that the dwarf bros made for me are okay.

So they didn't see it as dangerous huh. Or maybe they just considered them ornaments. But I can't call the ones who took my equipment as ill-prepared. Even I wouldn't find them dangerous in the past after all. The magic power is being concealed to the very limit and it isn't like I was hiding them or anything.

The bangle in my right wrist. This is actually a weapon the dwarfs made. I voiced the small phrase that serves as a key.

A faint and inconspicuous light wraps around the bangle and my right arm. In an instant, weight is felt in my hand. A sword materialized in my right hand.

"?! That is?!" (Eva)

"Shh… Don't talk so loud" (Lime)

I can understand her surprise. But I want her to at least think about the current situation. Right now, our interests should match. The interest of escaping from here that is.

"You, it is a lie that you are an employee right?" (Eva)

She must have felt something from my swinging gesture. The librarian looks at me with eyes of doubt. Yareyare, compared to that wicked man who captured Ne-san, I

don’t amount to much though. My winning ratio against Mondo has begun looking betterrecently.After this incident is over, I must train myself again.

“Employees of my level are all around in Kuzunoha Company. Let me ask just in case but, Eva-san, you want to escape right?” (Lime)

N? Weird. She is wavering? What does that mean? Is it possible that this woman is related to the people that incarcerated me here? If it is an internal fight, then the story would be different but…

“… This place is the Academy’s abandoned section. The bunch that are making this as their base… are quite the organization” (Eva)

“Heh～, those words hold more strength than mere speculation. You, what are you trying to say?” (Lime)

“I mean that there are people inside the Academy cooperating as well. Even if I escape from here, I am just a mere librarian. The situation wouldn’t really change” (Eva)

Even though your life is most likely in danger, you really say quite the composed things. Well, it is certainly true that there are suspicious people roaming around inside the Rotsgard Academy. Internal cooperation is probably necessary after all. Well, from now on we will be making clear which ones are in that side. I will do that while I get my katana back.

“What you say is true. In just a few days later, they may catch you again” (Lime)

“Also, you were defeated by that person. And it was completely one sided even from my untrained eyes. Not only could you not defeat that person, you couldn’t even escape. Right?” (Eva)

You poke where it hurts. Certainly. I noticed that I couldn’t escape, so I clenched my teeth and fought, and was defeated. It wasn’t a half-baked strength that would let me say that I could beat that person if I fight next time. Just like when I was defeated by Sis and Boss, I felt despair.

That brat was a bit older than Boss. Probably the same age as Shiki-san? But having so much power, that person should be famous, and yet, I haven’t heard anything about this.

“Just like you say, if that thing is there, it is over. But relax. That person is not here. I have also played some cards of my own. My actions stem from a possibility of success” (Lime)

I am not someone that just gets defeated and lets it go. If there’s something I can currently do, I will struggle. That’s something the present me has decided. Currently, that bastard is not around this area. To get into action, this situation is convenient.

“Even if I believe in that, it doesn’t mean the danger I carry will change. If you are telling me you will save me from here, I wish you could take the trouble of sweeping out the guys that are making the Academy their nest as well” (Eva)

She makes quite the unlikable eyes. Eyes as if appraising

you. I can't help but think that this librarian Eva has too many discrepancies. Is this her real self? In that case, to be in a place where so many people gather… She at least doesn't give me the impression of a librarian. This woman, is she hiding her position as a noble, or is she a fallen noble? Somewhere around these two options maybe?

In that case, her name is probably fake as well. Boss really has a troublesome acquaintance. This kind of things are what Tomoe-nesan likes, so taking care of it immediately might be a bad idea. She is also an acquaintance of Boss, so it makes it even more complicated.

"Take the trouble huh. Well, I do plan on showing them my gratitude. What merits are there to go to such lengths?" (Lime)

Even if I have quit being an adventurer, I don't like doing things for free. Right now I am someone that's working under a company. If I am going to do work, I should get a reward or in the future it will become troublesome.

"… If your background is truly that of a personnel of Kuzunoha Company, I can provide beneficial information for your master. And if you really crush the organization that is extending its hand to the Academy…" (Eva)

This organization huh. This woman, she definitely knows something about this bunch. Boss would get angry, so I will probably have to ask Shiki-san to peek inside her head a bit in secret. I don't know her connection, but I can see that she knows enough to fear them.

This is definitely the bunch Boss asked to investigate. There's no way a simple librarian would know about such an inhyuman bunch. Eva huh. At this rate, it feels like I will have to investigate in detail her little sister Ruria as well.

But in this situation, I can't just carelessly refuse and create enemies that might get me from the back.

"… Extending its hand to the Academy, and?" (Lime)

"I promise you an enormous reward" (Eva)

How fishy. Seriously. In my times as adventurer, those words are what I doubted the most.

"Understood. Let's talk about the merits at a later time. I guarantee your safety. I will have you come with me to Boss's place. But before that, you will probably be seeing displeasing things, so you are obviously prepared right?" (Lime)

"No problem" (Eva)

Then, let's finish this in one beat and return to report to Boss. Geez, having that brat seal thought transmission is so inconvenient.

Okay. I can still use spells, and I also have a weapon. To defeat the bunch that is here, this is good enough.

Boss told me to put the report as top priority, and depending on what I see from now on, I might not be able to restrain myself. No, saying it clearly, I probably can't. Thinking that way, it might have been good that I can't use thought transmission.

First, the katana. How dare they take away my comrade which I received from Sis. I already have a grasp of the location. This is a weaponthat I had them endow with an ability, so I can also accomplish such feat. Weapons with abilities endowed to them are incredibly expensive depending on the quality. Maybe there was some convincing from Sis and Boss with the dwarf bros, but they replicated my request practically exactly. How dare they put their dirty hands on my partner.

That's why, I wonder what kind of equipment is the one they are creating for Boss, that even those guys are having trouble making.

A brand new grid metal doorthat doesn't match the old atmosphere this place gives, stands in our way. I use the sword in my hand and cut it to pieces. It wasn't difficult. It is just that the weapon is so good that I can even do things like this.

With one other person accompanying me, I began the counter-attack.

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What… happened here?

Shiki and I were perplexedin the place that's supposed to be the place of the incident.

Because there was a blatant trace that was not there when we investigated before.

Also, this feeling, it is the same as what I felt with Tomoe and Lancer.

“Raidou-sama. This trace continues to where the abandoned section is” (Shiki)

“This wasn’t here before, right?” (Makoto)

“Yes. Also, this trace, I can feel the presence of a dragon” (Shiki)

So it really was that. When talking about dragons, Tomoe and Lancer do come to mind.

It isn’t like Tomoe can’t contact me so, is it Lancer? If it is him, it wouldn’t be strange for Lime to lose.

A rematch with Sofia? Don’t joke around. I still don’t want to fight her. I don’t want to meet her either. Anyways, those two don’t even listen to words.

There’s Shiki here so since I already know some of the cards they can play, I think I can provide a decent fight compared to before. But if we are going to fight, I want the prospects to be in our favor. I want to avoid fights that I don’t know the result of.

“This looks like it has been concealed at least, but it’s like that person didn’t even try that hard” (Makoto)

“It’s most likely a trap. It’s just that if it’s a dragon, the connection with the demons might have thinned a bit. There’s should be no dragon close to Rona” (Shiki)

“There’s the chance it is Lancer. They seem to be in the demons side” (Makoto)

“That Lancer whowas accompanying the Dragon Killer huh. Fumu. Then there’s no need to hesitate. Raidou-

sama, let's go" (Shiki)

"Hah?!" (Makoto)

No no, hesitate! If even Shiki becomes a battle junky, my stomach won't hold out from the stress you know?!

"If this path leads to Lancer and the Dragon Killer, isn't that a nice chance? I will have them repent while dying, for spilling my master's blood" (Shiki)

"S-Shiki…" (Makoto)

"Fukukuku that Lime. He really does do a good job. Normally, it is custom to call Tomoe-dono and Mio-dono, but in this emergency situation, we can make the excuse that we had no choice. I don't care about Dragon Killer or Sword Saint, whatever. To think that the chance would come for me… Nice, how nice. Excellent" (Shiki)

I thought that Shiki was the most composed one when listening to that story, but it seems that he was just silently holding it in. S-Scary.

His eyes were like those he had when I first met him. In those red eyes I felt more madness than before. That he is laughing weakly makes the image even more intense.

"Oi, those guys are really strong. Are you listening Shiki?" (Makoto)

"… Of course. That means I can make them suffer as much as I want right? Don't worry, I don't intend to hold back, not even one bit. If by any chance I am not enough, at that time it is fine to just call those two. I will show them that despair isn't such a shallow thing, those fools"

(Shiki)

He is totally gone. In the rematch with Sofia, I might not have a chance to participate. It is sad to leave it with my defeat, but Shiki is like this. My will to hold down my followers is already gone. No, honestly speaking, seeing them being angry because of me, I just don't feel like holding them back.

Shiki is this motivated. I will also be going, so unless something big happens, we can deal with it. I have enough confidence to say that it won't go the same as last time.

A trap huh.

Interesting. Since becoming my follower, I haven't seen Shiki's 100%. When training with me, it is mostly counter-spell training after all. After doing a pact with me and learned several things, I haven't actually seen him fight. In the Forest Onis' training, Shiki doesn't participate either.

No. If we are purely talking about fighting against an enemy, it is not only Shiki, I haven't seen any of my followers fighting seriously.

I don't know what is waiting for us, but Shiki and I head to the abandoned area.

Shiki was already wrapped with a fiendish aura while he mumbles. He is already in a state that's impossible to talk to.

(Boss, I am sorry for messing up. This is Lime. I am together with the Academy's librarian Eva-san too. Right

now I am in the abandoned section and have confirmed the existence of the facility. While putting Eva-san's safety as top priority, I have finished stopping the facility's functionality and wiped out the enemies) (Lime)

Eh?

L-Lime?!

Seriously. I received a contact from Lime who I thought was cut off. Good thing I left the communication open from our side. That's good but…

(Lime, are you okay?! Also, you are with Eva-san too?! Etto, eh, there was no dragon there?) (Makoto)

(Dragon? No, there was no dragon. I just had a talk with the facility… The two of us are completely fine. I will give the detailed report at a later time. Just that, it seems like Eva-san wants to talk with Boss about something. We will now be heading to where you are. You are around the place where I was attacked right?) (Lime)

(Y-Yeah…) (Makoto)

He has impressive location grasping. He is already like a professional scout.

(Well then) (Lime)

Well then?!

Meaning he is heading directly here?!

This is bad Shiki! We have to turn Shiki back! It would be bad if Eva-san sees him right now! Tte, my mind is a

complete mess?!

“Shiki, Lime is coming back! It seems like he has already finished dealing with things! Oi, return Shiki! Switch off! Stoooppu! Put away that fiendish magic power already! Smile! Smile!” (Makoto)

“… Lime. That guy, that guuuy!” (Shiki)

“Are you listening?! Switch!!” (Makoto)

“Having me psyched up so much and suddenly saying “I am back”! Just who does he think he is! Why can’t he just wait obediently, that guy?!” (Shiki)

“No no no no! There was no dragon! A mistake! It was a mistake!” (Makoto)

Before Lime returns, I try to soothe Shiki into returning to his Academy mode. It’s been a while since I have had such a high difficulty mission.

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(Raidou huh. I won’t take his words about being a merchant to heart. But it is certainly true that I didn’t feel a single bit of hate towards demons. I didn’t even feel like he had an objective like the Dragon Killer who joined hands with us. Normal, it was truly normal. Are you telling me that boy interacts with demons as if he were talking to a foreign hyuman?)

Rona was lying silently on the bed at the room addressed for Karen Frost. Her eyes were also closed. But inside her head, she was trying to put in order the vast amount of unexpected information.

Her main job as a demon general is to gather information and bring it to practical use. At times she also proposes plans and tactics. In terms of battle power, between the 4 demon generals, she is third place. But she doesn't really mind it that much. Because she considers that as long as she can be of use to her master in her specialty, then that's good. That's why, even if she ends up being hated or despised because of how she uses her specialty, Rona will not falter. For her that's actually a representation of her loyalty to her mission, so she is proud of it.

(His ability as a teacher in a hyuman academy is too deviated. Even in the academies that have several high leveled teachers, his quality is a bit different. And also, if the hyumans that he is guiding will be appearing from now on, that would be a bit inconvenient. That kind of thinking is something that's similar to ours. Against an opponent that has more numbers, there's the need of a drawback. Meaning that he is a target that one should take care stealthily. The problem is that amount of information and that person's thinking in itself. He knows my name that only a set number of people know. That kind of information gathering ability, I have to crush it somehow. I am surprised by the way of thinking of Raidou, but in reality it is a really beneficial one. I felt like he was pretty easy to handle and I think that he can become a useful pawn. A person that knows my name and can't lower my guard from. The best method would be to eliminate Shiki and entice Raidou. It should become a big benefit to us demons)

Right now, Rona has ordered the people that have stealthily infiltrated to investigate about the Kuzunoha Company and Raidou. As it wasn't a place with much

danger level, the people that Rona brought weren't that excelling in ability. Even though they are currently short of capable people, she will regret this decision.

Because it would not only be pointless if they are sniffed out, but will actually backfire as well, Rona ordered them to make sure not to be detected. It would affect the speed of information gathering as well as the efficiency, but right now there's a need to know the other party if even a bit. For that sake, she judged that it would be okay to force themselves.

(In the Academy there's no visible movements from Kuzunoha Company. I will confirm their merchandise at a later time but… since it is a miscellaneous store, I don't know if there will be anything that will stand out. In the guild's information, the company's entry was filled as an "all do" store. Taking into account the time when he registered in the guild and his decision of the type of industry, it looks like his business ability isn't that good. The person itself doesn't have excelling ability, and yet, in his surroundings there's only capably people. How strange. He probably has some sort of talent. Let's see, his fighting ability was quite high. To the point that I almost thought of fighting him seriously. But his assistant Shiki seems to be pretty strong as well though… Is it sufficient to just call it an ability to gather capable people?)

Staying in a vague area without being able to reach a conclusion, Rona gets irritated by her thoughts that don't show any signs of organizing. At least, as long as they don't do anything, she won't be able to put anything together. In that case, she must put up a plan, but in this state where she can't clearly see the other party and

doesn't know how much information they possess, just how far would she be able to step into? She can't bring herself to decide.

(For now, let's have them show me their mobilization ability and fighting power in "that matter". I have already finished the original objective I came here for, so there's no need for me to cross a dangerous bridge. As long as there aren't any people related to the temple, there's no way he would have a good impression of hyumans in "that matter". Injustice to the demi-humans can be shifted into blame for the hyumans. If we take into account that I am here, it might even connect into a better impression of the demons. No matter where it rolls, it won't be bad for me. If he asks for my cooperation, even if I decide to help myself, it won't be an impediment. It can even turn into a foundation for future plans. That situation, you might say, it is a good chance)

Rona opens her eyes. In the current state, she can cope with accidents and she has already thought about the prospects. Her thought arranging must have finished.

And she notices that the curtains of night were beginning to fall. Noticing that she used quite the amount of time, she makes a wry smile.

The chances a war between hyumans and demons beginning in the near future are high. She has already anticipated that she will be participating in that war herself and she still has a lot of work left to do. It's just that, the existence of Raidou has scrambled her schedule a bit.

(Anyways, as long as Io is in Stella, most unexpected scenarios can be handled. In terms of commanding in the battlefield and battle power, it is hard to find people I can believe to this extent. Even when I think about the current scale of the battle, we have the hyuman Sofia who is the number one in the list of strongest, so as long as we have her in our hands, the attacks from that side will be less without doubt. Also, it would be perfect if we could just learn the identity and gauge the power of the Devil. The stage is moving exactly as our lord has written. If the Devil is Raidou then things would turn easier, but as expected, there's no way it would go so smoothly. The battle ability and magic scale; the information is not that reliable but we also gathered information about its appearance. If we put aside the gender of Raidou, it would be that coat only. A red and blue vestment. If we take into account the parts that look the same, that's the only part that matches. Hah~. If I just suspect of him because of that blue coat, my intuition is growing dull. Even though I intended to not be infected by that stupidly peaceful atmosphere at the Academy… Geez, let's just rest for today)

The time she learns that Raidou and the Devil are the same person, seems to be in a later future.

Chapter 102: Lime's Report

~ Report of the Rotsgard Academy's sector redevelopment plan ~

While in the said investigation, I encountered an unknown person. Its height was about 1.70m, thin build. Silver hair and black eyes. With an unsettlingly orderly face, it smiled. Probably a man. His features were hyuman, but he is most likely not. What should be pointed out is his overwhelming battle power.

I failed to escape, so I decided to escape in the middle of the fight. He activated a ring-looking tool and the thought transmission was sealed. Unknown if there were any other effects. Not even able to see the boy's true ability, I was defeated. I was somehow able to hit him once and was successful in marking him.
P.S – In the middle of the fight, there was a scream of a woman. I later confirmed that she was the Academy's librarian, Eva.

Lost my consciousness and woke up restraint in an underground ward at the area I was investigating in, popularly known as the abandoned sector. Confirmed that the librarian Eva was also restraint like me. After confirming the situation, I decided to escape. I confirm the will of the librarian, guard her and have her accompany me. There's the chance that Eva is a noble. This is a speculation based on her speech and behavior.

Being in the facility of the investigation target, I have confirmed that the organization is medium-large scale. Confirmed about the reality of the "experiments" in my

investigation. The various experiments, also known as research, were inhyuman just as predicted. I was unable to find a single test subject capable of recovering. There were mostly demi-humans, but I was also able to find few hyumans as well.

There was no reaction from my marking and have judged that the aforementioned boy's location is unknown. Determined to continue my mission. Taking into consideration the target's danger level as well as its immediate battle power, I decided to promptly dispose them. Because I was in a state where thought transmission was impossible, I followed my own decision.

In the midst of disposing, I didn't find the aforementioned boy and there were no signs of reinforcements either. I completed the disposal in a prompt and quiet manner. Setting up traps and surveillance, I escaped the concerned facility along with the librarian.

For now there's no movements from the remnants and was unable to pinpoint the ones cooperating from within the Academy. I intend to pinpoint them in my future investigations and will report. That's all.

P.S. I wrote something I am not used to in haste, so please do forgive me for its imperfections. Lime.

What's up with that last part Lime. Also, your sign is pretty. I also have to learn to write my own sign. In things like contracts and statement of delivery it is necessary after all.

Moreover, it feels like you jumped a lot of things when writing this. Also, if Lime was able to wipe out the enemy, he should have been able to easily escape from there. It's just unnatural to shift into force just because the thought transmission was sealed. You had Eva-san accompanying you after all.

But, who is the boy in the beginning that Lime is treating as a kid? Lancer can be easily identified because he would summon swords out. That boy should have some sort of specific trait as well. That he didn't appear afterwards worries me. Isn't he in the organization as well? Also the fact that Lime was completely fine when captured. Just what was the reason that boy fought Lime?

Hmph. Even if he kidnapped Eva-san while at it, if I were the assailant, I would first take away the equipment of the people I captured. I would do a body check and restraint them in a way that they can't offer resistance, I think. In that case, Lime had his katana stolen? If his katana that he declared to be more important than his life was stolen, then he would definitely want to get it back. But would it end with just getting it back? That Lime who got pretty angry just because I told him about Rona-san's distrust?

There's no description of the techniques of the person that stole his katana in the report. The experiments as well, there's no detailed content in the report. Just that, he said they were in a state where they can't be saved, meaning they are most likely dead.

Just like what he wrote in the end, it is quite the sloppy report. Let's call Lime at a later time and have him tell

me the report again in person. I don't intend on having him write another one.

"Raidou-sama, Eva-san says she wants to talk to you"

Eva-san huh.

I, who was reading the report silently, raise my head at Shiki's words. I had Eva-san wait at the room next door. Well, I plan on having her stay here until Lime cleans up the related party from the Academy. If she dies, it wouldn't be good for my health.

Also, I have to ask her the reason why she was in such a place. After she was restrained, it seems like she acted together with Lime, but for someone who has seen how Lime dealt with things, her attitude is way too calm. For a librarian that is surrounded by books, this is too strange.

If the other party has resolved herself to talk, then let's proceed. I don't like being in this room too much either.

Ah right. Having Shiki idle would be a waste. This is an unexpected outcome, but the situation has progressed. From now on, let's have Rona-san's cooperation and resolve this in an early stage.

"Shiki, I will hear what Eva-san has to say. I am sorry but, could you go to Rona-san's place and get her to help with the cleaning of the Academy's related party along with Lime and the others? It is fine to tell her what Shiki thinks is safe to disclose" (Makoto)

"Understood. Well then, I will go stir up Rona" (Shiki)

… It feels like Rona-san and Shiki get along well. I wonder what kind of relationship they had in the past.

While seeing off Shiki, I knock the neighboring room's door. Soon after, a "go ahead" came as answer. Eva-san seems to have prepared herself already.

When I enter the room, there was a slightly exhausted librarian I am used to seeing. It's just, the eyes she is using to look at me right now were a bit different from usual. Those weren't the eyes of someone looking at an acquaintance. That's right, those looked like the eyes of someone probing your worth. It isn't as blunt as appraising, but it does make me a bit nervous.

"Thanks to Lime-san I was able to escape with my life. Thank you very much Raidou-sensei. It seems that he is an employee in this company but, he is pretty strong huh?" (Eva)

[He was an adventurer before coming to work at my place after all. I was surprised when I received the report. I am glad you are safe]

"Shiki-san, and that man as well. Is there a rule that says you have to be strong in order to enter this company?" (Eva)

[By no means. It's just that you get to meet the strong ones by chance. And so, I heard that you had something to talk with me?]

"Yes. You have probably heard the story from Lime-san but… it is about information and a reward" (Eva)

[Wait, from Lime? He is currently pretty tired and has

gone to bed already. Information and reward huh]

This is a lie. It wasn't in the report, but I have certainly heard about the information and reward directly from Lime. About the reward, well, if she is giving it to me, I will gladly receive it, but I am more interested in the beneficial information she has.

"Yes. I promised Lime-san when he was going to rescue me. The reward will be when the threat lurking in the Academy is wiped out, but I can tell you the information now" (Eva)

[Let's hear it]

"Yes. It's about the portrait of the two persons you showed me before" (Eva)

"?!!!"

"Sorry, I lied. The portrait you showed me and asked me if I knew anything about them, I actually have an idea" (Eva)

"…"

The portrait of my parents. It's the one I had Rinon draw for me. I have been asking the people I am acquainted in the Academy if they know about them. Of course, there were absolutely none who knew them.

I have asked a number of people before Eva, but I didn't even get an "I think I have seen them before". It's certainly very beneficial information for me. I can learn about the parents I wanted to know about after all. It is also one of the reasons I came to this academy.

“If my memories are correct, those two, one worked in an important post at a certain country for a noble and the other, I think was a high ranked priest in the temple” (Eva)

Noble and priest? My father and mother?

I totally thought they were adventurers. This is pretty unexpected. Especially about my mother having a sacred profession. The image I have of her doesn’t match at all.

[… Noble and priest. In what country?]

“I don’t think Raidou-sensei will tell me what kind of connection you have with those two, but is it okay to hear it?” (Eva)

[Benefactors. Well, I am not sure if I can ever repay that favor though]

The ones that gave birth to me, the greatest benefactors of all. If they ask me if I can pledge filial piety, I would only be able to respond with an “I don’t know” though. They didn’t match the word “parents”. It’s also discrepant from the setting I created of Waka-sama in this world.

“I… see. The last news of their whereabouts were from an adventurer, so this might be some kind of fate” (Eva)
＜最後の消息は冒険者との噂もあったようですから、
ひょっとしたら何かの縁があったのかもしれませんね＞

[Please tell me what you know about them]

“It was a promise after all. Those two were in a satellite country in the already ruined Elysion. A small country called Kaleneon. The pair of noble and priest were

supposed to marry there” (Eva)

[Were supposed to?]

“Yeah. They were unable to actually marry and were driven out of the country. There’s talk that they became adventurers, but before anyone knew, news of them were cut off” (Eva)

[Why were they driven out of the country?]

“That’s… there’s no detailed record of that matter. To begin with, Kaleneon received an attack by the demon race that was even harsher than in Elysion, and there’s barely anything left of the king’s genealogy. On top of that, the world is trying to completely forget the name of the country itself” (Eva)

Big invasion. The event where 10 years ago, the demon race ran out of patience and with the Goddess’ whereabouts unknown, they marched south. I read in books that the result was a complete victory for the demon race. Even in a hyuman academy it was written as a complete victory. I think that war was more close to trampling.

Kaleneon’s noble and priest. That’s mom and dad’s past. And that place is already a ruined country.

If there’s not even records of it, then trying to follow their tracks might be harder.

Wait. That’s right, in a country whose name has even been forgotten, a country where even the king’s genealogy barely survived…

Why is it that this librarian knows about this small country and noble? Was it written in the Academy's library?

[Why is it that you know about the noble and priest of a ruined country like that?]

Could it be that there's something like a poem that's being spread like a story regarding my parents? There's the possibility that they really did do something incredible before transferring worlds, just like I first thought.

"There a number of books that have information regarding Kaleneon" (Eva)

A number of books she says. In that place that holds so many books which you wouldn't be able to finish reading in your whole life, and that's all she has to say? Well, I did know that Elysion was one of the five major powers that were destroyed by the demon race, but if it comes to every single one of the small countries surrounding it, I don't even know their names. And in truth, this is my first time hearing about Kaleneon.

[A number of books huh. As expected of Eva-san. You really do know the library well]

"No. It is certainly true that there were a number of books regarding Kaleneon, but there was not a single bit of information regarding those two. There's a different reason as to why I know those two" (Eva)

[A different reason huh. Is it okay to ask?]

"You already know that Ruria and I are sisters, but you

don’t know our family name right?” (Eva)

[Yeah. There are many who don’t have family names, so I didn’t think it was strange to not mention it]

“We… did have. Now, no, for the time that is to come, we are in a position where we are not allowed to say that name” (Eva)

[That doesn’t sound peaceful]

“In the fight against the demon race, our parents decided to escape instead of fighting. In the end, the only ones who managed to escape were Ruria and I. Moreover, even when we were nobles, to be alive after our own country was burned down. We were pushed with the brand of cowards…” (Eva)

Eva-san was a noble huh. No, with how she speaks, there’s the chance that she still thinks of herself as a noble.

The nobles of this world have the duty of protecting their land. In peaceful times, they can just get tax from the populace, spread their name in society and possess a decent amount of land, and there wouldn’t be any complains. No, rather, they are considered wise rulers. They would be called famous people.

But when their land is facing danger, they have to lead their troops and fight to protect it. And they must repel them no matter what. If the land burns down, the nobles must go down along manly. That’s how the nobles in this world work.

If the feudal lords don’t do anything unreasonable and

they protect them on top of that, then the nobles are doing their duty.

Even the stupid nobles of Limia who have high bad reputation, declared that they would protect their lands. Those guys who exploit the taxes and their main scenario is socializing. Of course, their lands have not been exposed to the fires of war, so how far they would really go when that happens, I don't know.

That's why, the nobles that show their back and escape are treated in a pretty harsh way in this world. I think that escaping an unwinnable fight is an option, but my way of thinking comes from the peaceful Japan, so I can't say much.

[So you two were nobles]

"Who shamelessly survived though. Even now, the people that hear about our circumstances, look at us with eyes of disgust and we have also been pestered. Of course, I did ask why they didn't just fight uprightly and died. No matter how many times I asked my late parents, there was no answer. There were many times when we thought about suicide. But that's no good, that way won't work" (Eva)

[No good?]

"Even if we suicide, the brand pushed on ourselves won't disappear. The people who died, as well as the burned down land won't return" (Eva)

Well, that's certainly true. When the stigma has been pushed, just killing yourselves won't make it disappear.

However, what does this have to do with my parents? Isn't the talk straying?

"That's why I decided on getting it back before dying. The country of Kaleneon, no, even if it's only the lost Ansland territory" (Eva)

Kaleneon.

Eva-san and Ruria are from the same country as my parents. Ansland must be her hometown. But this is absurd. They have no allies. With just the two of them, what is it that they can do?

No matter how I think about it, I can only picture them dying in vain.

?! Dangerous! That voice, if that was really Eva-san's voice, was I going to be used by her for the sake of that plot?! No well, this is such a reckless objective and there's no way I would go along with it. Yeah, probably not gonna happen.

[What a grand thinking you have there. I see, Kaleneon was Eva-san's native country huh. I understand now. Thank you very much for the important information]

"… No, I still have more information. Please listen" (Eva)

What an unpleasant pause. Could it be, she hasn't given up on having me cooperate?

If she is going to continue giving me information, well, there's no loss in that.

The talk with the fallen noble Eva continues.

Chapter 103: Full Guest Night

In the silent night, I was alone in my room.

What Eva-san told me, the report of Lime, the information request of the demon general called Rona-san…

It has become quite complicated. Because of the information increase, the situation has progressed, but the things I have to think about increased at once and it is just a mess in my mind right now.

From my experience, even if I try to think about them in order, this kind of situations can't be solved. I am not a detective and moreover, I am the type that tries to avoid deductions and complicated situations.

I am okay when dealing with them one by one, but if they all come at once, my reasoning ability gets frozen or more like, I want to throw them away. This is one of my weak points I want to fix.

I wanted to try writing it down and see how it goes, but it's just not going well. How troublesome.

If things are like this, maybe it would have been better if I heard Eva-san's talk and deal with it at that time? But she is someone that's not related to the company nor Rona-san. Also, there's no prove that all she said was true. I really think that returning to my room to rest was the correct decision.

Yeah, let's stop. Thinking about this by myself will not solve anything. Instead of thinking by myself and ending

up making a wrong decision, it would be better to just wait for Shiki to return and have the two of us think about it, even if I have to sacrifice my sleeping time.

In that case, let's arrange what Eva-san told me at least, while waiting for Shiki's return.

She is a hyuman that came from a small country which was destroyed by the advance of the demon race. To my surprise, it was the same country as my parents, Kaleneon. Dad was a noble in an important post, while my mother was a priestess in a temple of the Goddess. I don't know how important a priestess is, but hearing about having an important post, I think they were from a pretty well off family. If things played differently, I might have been born as a noble's son. Oops, right now's not the time to think about that. And so, Eva-san was a survivor who abandoned her land, even when she was a noble. It seems like she is recklessly wishing for the revival of her household, but since she didn't have anyone to help her, she was in a despairing state, is what she told me. It seems like she didn't know my parents personally.

There's a reason why Eva-san didn't choose suicide and decided to chase after a reckless dream. That was what she told me after. Being exposed to humiliation and contemplating suicide, there was a time when she was temporarily in an unstable emotional state. I think that's only natural. While protecting her little sister Ruria, they without doubt passed bitter days. As a result, Eva Ansland and her little sister enclosed themselves in their own world, and doubted and rejected everything that came from the outside world.

I can't even imagine how serious the situation was, but anyways, when Eva-san began to doubt even the Goddess, that organization made contact with her. They told her that there were many who were from satellite countries of Elysion and those who were believers of the Goddess from Kaleneon, so I could understand that Eva-san throwing away her beliefs is something quite considerable. That Goddess, she is even hopeless with the hyumans that believe in her. If I remember correctly, she said that the invasion of the demon race happened while she was taking a nap.

Organization. That's something that made my mind worry. It seems to be a group that holds enmity towards the Goddess, but their scale is unknown. Only thing I know is that it seems their rules are pretty strict and if there's even a sign of betrayal, they would sever connections and dispose you. It is a system structured of secrecy, and there are many inside members that don't even know the faces of the others. It seems that it just goes as far as having means of contact, and only a limited number of members know as much as their background. It is probably something like a secret association? But to be erased just by showing signs of betrayal, things like false accusations won't occur? Oops, my train of thought got derailed again. Keep in track, keep in track.

The surprising thing is that their members are composed of hyumans, demi-humans and demons. The race didn't matter. There's varied types of information flowing and shared, and it seems like the influence it has as an organization is pretty high. What I have clear is that it hasn't showed its face in public and it doesn't have connections with any power, or maybe it has connections

with all powers; it is uncertain. In the war of hyumans and demons, there might be a chance that this organization will intrude as a third power.

I see, if you have connections with such an organization, it wouldn't be strange to have one or two dreams. Eva-san didn't tell me, but she probably witnessed the power of that organization in some way. She at least witnessed something that made her think it would be possible to restore her land that has been ruled over by the demons. I can tell that they have power, but since there's no concrete show of it, it feels more troublesome than a country.

… In my previous world the politics were pretty muddy on the inside, but in this parallel world, the essence of people doesn't change huh. Thinking about it in this world's common sense, having hyumans and demons, who have a history of strives, join hands is just impossible; unless I think of it as "the enemy of my enemy is my ally". In this case, the enemy would be the Goddess. Because it seems to be an organization that hates the Goddess after all. No matter if they accomplish their objective or if they break down, later, I think it would return to a relationship where they hate each other again. To borrow the strength of such a dangerous organization; Eva-san, even when you look composed, maybe you have actually been engulfed by madness.

And so this time, seeing Eva-san together with Lime, she was about to be disposed. Since she felt her life was in danger, she requested protection from us.

In this current matter, Rona-san told me that since there were victims from the demi-humans and the demons

because of the hyumans' inhyuman researches, she wants to investigate and save the ones that can be saved. This is just an assumption, but she probably showed me that inhyuman scenery to make my emotions turn into the demon's side and control me that way. Because if I am shown only the good side of one of the camps in the war, it wouldn't be strange to hold a prejudiced view. Afterwards, they might come saying that for the sake of stopping this inhyuman acts the demon lord dispatched a general, and have me think that they are sincere people who possess good will. From what Shiki said, Rona-san is a person that uses artifices after all.

?!!

Someone is getting closer. I, who was trying to put in order what Eva-san told me, feel a strong response.

In the past, from my experience when I was thrown into the battlefield and had to fight the Dragon Killer and was even seriously injured, I was able to learn how to gauge the ability of someone from the [Sakai] I expand. The standard right now is Shiki. By reducing the targets, I am able to expand it to a certain extent and now I am able to activate it practically unconsciously. In a place like the wasteland where there aren't many people, I can reduce the conditions even more and use it more conveniently, but this place is the Academy town. There are a lot of people here. The weakening [Sakai] I use in my lectures, there's no other people around, so it is easy to use. It is prove that I haven't mastered this skill yet, so I do feel bad about it as well.

"Boss, it's him. The brat that treated me as a beanbag is approaching!"

Without knocking, Lime opens the room's door and urges me to be cautious in one breath. For now, that boy seems to have some sort of connection with that organization. Since his looks are similar in age as mine, it should be fine to call him boy. To be 1.7m, so jealous. No no. Anyways, his power seems to be at least Shiki-class.

"Lime, you can step back. No, can you please call Shiki here?" (Makoto) <Wait, how can he talk with Lime?>

"… No. I may not amount to much, but please let me participa-" (Lime)

"Waka!"

"Waka-sama!"

"Uwa?!!"

Suddenly, two women enter the room. Two women I know. My followers, Tomoe and Mio. W-Why are these two in Academy town so suddenly? And they are also strangely hurried.

Isn't their timing way too good? Could it be, I am under surveillance?

"Tomoe, and even Mio?! What happened?" (Makoto)

"… So you are alright. In that case, it is a relief for now" (Tomoe)

"… Hoh"

And now they are showing faces of relief. Could it be that the boy approaching is the reason? He is pretty close

now. But it doesn't look like he is going to attack. There's not even signs of him using magic power.

"Is the reason of all this, the one that's approaching here?" (Makoto)

"Yeah. I don't know of his reason of contact, but he is a bit of a troublesome one" (Tomoe)

For Tomoe to use the word troublesome. That… would be harsh for Lime to handle. Or more like, does she know about the other party?

"Lime, retire" (Mio)

"Mio-nesan that's a bit too much" (Lime)

"Lime, people have their respective roles. Even if you are here, you would only be a hindrance. If you are vexed by that, you should go train yourself more-ja na. This time just step back" (Tomoe)

"Sis…" (Lime)

"These two are here Lime. Be relieved. And it isn't like it is set that we will be fighting anyways" (Makoto)

"Boss… Understood. Please be careful. I will be excusing myself now" (Lime)

He was biting his lips. Even though he is a person that doesn't usually show his emotions on his face. Maybe he was quite mortified by the fact that Tomoe told him to step back. He is a person that has a lot more talent and sense than me, so he is most likely going to get stronger again.

The person in question is… standing at the entrance of the store. Why?

After a while of stopping, he once again moves.

The sound of *pinpon rings inside the store. Even when the store is closed, there is a button set in case of urgent matters. It is the sound of that.

Of course, when it is used for pranks, I have made it so that they receive a fit punishment.

…

Uhm. I was pretty sure he would enter suddenly but, just what in the world…

What should I do? I don't think he just came to buy medicine. I even thought the store's glass would go boom. This is not what I expected.

"Waka, don't let your guard down" (Tomoe)

Tomoe is still looking pretty cautious. Just what big deal is coming?

Well, no choice but to see.

"Tomoe, Mio. Come together with me" (Makoto)

The two nod silently. Heading down from the second floor to the first, I open the door.

A silver haired boy, just like Lime's report, was standing there. He looks the same age as me. He is around 1.7m, just like the report as well. In this world, 1.8m is the average. If his age is just as his looks tell, he still has

room to grow.

His attire is a white shirt and what looks like denim pants. He is wearing his shirt in a rough way and has quite a few buttons unfastened. Skin white enough that it looks slightly unhealthy, was being shown by his exposed chest.

[Do you have some business this late at night?]

I decided to ask his reason normally.

“Yeah, nice to meet you. I am… the master of the adventurer guild. Since I ended up being rude to Lime Latte who is working with you, I came here to apologize. Can I please come in?”

“Hah?”

Curiously, Tomoe, Mio and my voice overlap. The Guild Master(?) narrows his black eyes and shows a full smile with his arms crossed on his back. There’s not a single shred of hostility.

In a situation where I am already filled with information, here comes one more. It looks like I am heartlessly being given more information to arrange.

Chapter 104: Dangerous, Dangerous

“That was actually just a front. But that guy was incredibly strong. I was so surprised, look, I got a bit cut here see? Also, that katana had an amazing endowment. I still haven’t been able to release the carved seal it gave me you know? Well, at first, I was planning on just patting him lightly. But there were other guys coming, so I was troubled. I unintentionally defeated him. It may not serve as an apology, but I did leave some traces that were easy to follow and I gave him a protection spell, so his safety was assured”

With a strangely amiable smile, the so called Guild Master entered the visitors’ reception room. It was late at night, so I had Mio pour tea and now the three of us are facing him in our seats. Shiki has not returned yet. The talk with Rona-san must have prolonged.

This was an apology to Lime, so I was thinking about calling him, but he soon said that was only a front and turns over his sleeve, showing the faint remains of a wound in his elbow as he happily talks about it. Also, he really talks a lot. He is a person I just can’t understand what he is thinking. I get a feeling he is trying to explain that the fight with Lime was kind of an accident. He is fast-talking with a smile on his face, so just trying to hear him out is a chore.

“And well, about the real reason I came here. Ah, that’s right. Hey, the kimono Nesan there, this place has a peculiar fruit right? Can you bring those too along with the tea? I haven’t tried them yet you see”

The topic also changes so often. He looks the same age as me, but looking at his way of talking and behavior, I feel female-like characteristics. But, how to say it, he is a person that just engulfs you in his pace. I don't know if this is part of his plan or what, but he is blurting out a lot of information. For example, the words katana and kimono.

Moving the corner of her eyes in a displeased manner, Mio doesn't get up from her seat and just glares at him. But he doesn't show a single trace of being agitated by her intimidation.

I exhale once.

[Mio, please prepare them for him]

"… Understood. Please wait for a bit" (Mio)

"Iyaa, I am looking forward to those. While you are at that, please bring more tea. Do you have a different flavor? If there is, please bring a different one, Oneesan"

Nonchalantly. At the other side of the closed door, I could feel the blood thirst around the place where Mio is. She is totally angered. I understand her feelings. Tomoe also has a protruded vein that pulsates every time he says something, and looks like she is displeased as she maintains her silence. I also don't want to go along with this pace forever. Let's quickly move the conversation.

[Now then, Guild Master-dono, could you tell us your business?]

"Aw Raidou-kun. No, should I call you Makoto-kun? Calling me Guild Master-dono, don't treat me like a

stranger please. Ah, there's also no need to use written communication. I am not a hyuman after all"

?!

Hey hey.

[Sadly, I don't understand what you are trying to say]

"Ahahaha, so cute Makoto-kun. Your writing is crumbling a bit you know? You are unexpectedly the panicky type huh. Just talk to me normally. You can, right?"

I tried my best to answer normally, but it seems I still showed my agitation. I still have a long way to go.

But, this guy, just what in the world is he?! Even if it is true that he is the Guild Master of the Adventurer Guild, there's no way there's someone that can know so much about me.

Also, the guilds are a system that has been in this world since long. Even in the books I read at the library, there were descriptions of the Adventurer Guild that was born in Elysion. In short, it is clearly sided with the Goddess. In that case, I have already been found out by the Goddess?!

"Fufufu, that face. Could it be, you are thinking that your existence and information has been exposed to the Goddess?"

"?!"

He can even read my mind?!

“Bull’s eye huh. You can be at ease. The Goddess has not grasped your present condition. Well, she is guilty of a lot of things after all. She is currently in a situation where she can’t move much. At that rate, it is probably going to take a while to make the groundwork”

“… You, what are you?” (Makoto)

“Heh～! Makoto-kun, that’s how your voice sounds! Nice. The voice of a man that has a bit of youth left. I like it. That’s right, if I remember correctly, Makoto-kun was a high school student. Still being a student, it must have been hard on you after coming to this world right?”

What’s up… with this guy? Seriously, what’s up with him?!

He knows all my details. Not only that, he certainly has information of my previous world as well!

I began to feel uncomfortable at the boy that has been talking to me since the beginning with a smile on his face. My field of vision narrows. This is bad. I can tell that I am being swallowed by the other party. Every time I talk, I can tell from his smile that he is feeling happiness about it. I feel nauseated by that.

“Don’t mess around and just answer. What are you?” (Makoto)

My voice trembles. Damn it, I’m scared. I can tell that my words are losing their composure.

“Calling me “you”, that makes me sad. I am the Guild Master. I have not lied to you”

“… I can only call you with “you”. I don’t even know your name after all” (Makoto)

And yet, he knows me in detail. Is he an acquaintance of the Goddess? He at least seems to be acquainted with her. He certainly doesn’t seem to be hyuman. My words work on him after all. In that case, the one that works as the head of the Guild that controls the adventurers is not hyuman. In this world of hyuman supremacy, is that even possible?!

“Ah, sorry! That’s right. I didn’t tell you my name. Makoto-kun, please forgive me for my rudeness. Then, I will introduce-”

“Stop with the farce” (Tomoe)

“… Cutting in as one’s talking and saying it’s a farce, that’s not peaceful, blue haired samurai-dono”

“Hmph! You know my name and still play the fool. What was that about not lying to Waka-ja. Even though from the beginning you were lying about being a Guild Master” (Tomoe)

“Yareyare. Did you sleep so much in the wasteland that you even forgot how to talk properly, Shen?”

“You too, there’s no trace of your previous self. “Myriad Colors” Dragon, Root” (Tomoe)

Eh?

◇◆◇◆◇◆◇◆

“Root? Myriad Colors? Uhm, this guy… is a dragon?”

(Makoto)

Is how it is right? It came from Tomoe's mouth, so there's probably no mistake. But I practically, no, I can't feel a dragon presence from him at all.

"Yes, Waka. This guy is a full-fledged superior dragon. And a prime superior at that. Said to have gained wisdom and polished his skills, and hasn't lost in his lifetime. Myriad colors means he has ten thousands of colors and it's Root's pseudonym" (Tomoe)

"Aah, not only did you intrude in my introduction, but you also exposed my name when I am here. What a boring thing you have done. You samurai junkie" (Root)

Prime superior dragon. An undefeated dragon. This guy is?

"Say whatever you want. You who tries to deceive Waka with a cool face, has no right to say anything to me" (Tomoe)

"Yareyare, I don't want you who only slept the whole time and had no interest in the world, to say things like deceive, that would bring about misunderstandings" (Root)

Guild Master, no, the supreme dragon Root is talking to Tomoe with a stricter mood than with me.

A superior dragon, an existence that most hyumans and demi-humans would live their whole life without being able to see them. In the time that I was learning things in the library, I understood just how rare are the existences called superior dragons.

The peak of dragons. They are not affected by the passage of time, and when they grow old, they can give birth to themselves again and continue existing.

If I remember correctly, the names that were written in the library were: “Mitsurugi”, “Bakufu (Waterfall)”, “Sazanami (Sand Wave)”, “Akari (Crimson Light)”, “Yomatoi (Night Clad)”; those five. Myriad colors is the first time I have heard of it. I couldn’t find anything about the invincible Shen either. <About the names, don’t know which one you prefer>

They practically never get involved with hyumans, but there have been individual dragons that live close to hyuman territory. In rare cases, there are times when they lend their strength. When lending that power indirectly, people call it the dragon’s blessing.

Currently, the monarch guard knights of Gritonia have the blessing of Sazanami.

To have already encountered three of those super rare dragons, just what kind of luck do I have? The Invincible, the Sword Saint and the Myriad Colors. Tomoe, Lancer and Root! If approached unskillfully, this type of encounters could have killed me. A game where you encounter a boss class enemy while hiding inside a town, is definitely going to make people flame the creator. It reminds me that reality is not as kind as games.

“Did you abandon your dwelling? It was already in ruins when I saw it” (Tomoe)

“Yeah, a long time ago. It’s probably been like that since a thousand years ago. Are you done now? I want to talk

with Makoto-kun. Because of Shen, there's been misunderstandings, so I want to clear them out" (Root)

… The scales are way too different. One thousand years he says. Also, he was smiling that much at me, and yet, he barely raises the corners of his mouth at Tomoe and his eyes were not smiling at all. His attitude is too different.

"What do you mean by misunderstanding? There's still several things I want to ask you. And also, I have already thrown away the name Shen. Its Tomoe now, remember that" (Tomoe)

"So noisy. Just because Makoto-kun is here, you are playing the strong one huh. Yes yes, Tomo-e right?" (Root)

"TO.MO.E!! Next time you get that wrong, I will cut your head off!" (Tomoe)

"Sorry Makoto-kun. This chick, she is a dragon but an eccentric one. She is definitely causing you troubles all the time right?" (Root)

"Listen, Root!" (Tomoe)

No well, aren't you pretty weird yourself? I just, feel pretty sure about that.

Or more like, ignoring Tomoe and nonchalantly talking with me, he is quite the free dragon. If he is the peak of dragons, that means he is like the boss of Tomoe?

"I haven't lied to Makoto-kun. I want you to please believe in me, Makoto-kun" (Root)

“H-Hah～” (Makoto)

“Something like deceiving you, that’s an outrageous misunderstanding. My feelings are more pure” (Root)

Right after hearing that dangerous speech, a sharp edge was pushed out in between my face and the face of Root that had gotten closer to mine. The sharp edge of the single edged sword was facing at Root’s side. Tomoe, that’s a short sword. Don’t draw that out so easily. If you are going to draw out, draw out a long sword instead.

“… You bastard, you have really changed a lot. There’s no trace of your old self that went shouting around about rules and discipline” (Tomoe)

Rules? Discipline? Both of those words didn’t fit that guy called Root, no, it doesn’t fit dragons.

“Tomoe, you also changed. You showed no interest in anything and had zero trajectory, a dragon that only slept. But instead of being inelegant, you should have learned something before that, don’t you think?” (Root)

“I am no match for your wildness. This is something that’s been in my mind for a while… tell me that first. You, since when did you “become a man”?” (Tomoe)

???

“300 years ago maybe. I was tired of being a woman all the time. And so, I tried being a man. And it was comfortable. The first time I embraced a woman, I was deeply moved” (Root)

Tired? Of your gender? Eh?

I don't understand anything anymore. To begin with, you are a superior dragon, so things like kids have no meaning at all. Of course, embracing and being embraced should be pointless as well, right?

"Tried becoming… you say? You shouldn't be able to become one just by wanting it. And in the first place, I haven't heard of a superior dragon making children" (Tomoe)

Indeed Tomoe. Even if you say it as if changing toys, there's no way we can understand it.

"I was able to, so accept it. Also, I stopped rebirthing. I slowed my aging to the very limits and am thinking of enjoying this world. But you know, the ecstasy you get as a woman is actually bigger. That's why I got tired of being a man pretty fast, however, my world changed in that fateful day!" (Root)

Why are you still talking about ecstasy? Or more like, is that true? So women feel it better than men huh. I have learned something… useless. When I think about it, I end up going "and so what?" Seriously, even if you talk about it as if you were talking about your favorite sport, it's still troublesome.

"I don't really want to know about your change of standards in that perspective though…" (Tomoe)

Same, Tomoe. It is so overwhelming I can't bring this feelings into words, but I completely agree with you.

"One time, I had the chance to have a relationship with a man you see. How should I say it? Fulfillment of heart,

drug to the body, maybe? Well anyways, I tasted a happiness from inside me that I never felt before! No well, I later returned to being a woman and tried it out between women, but as expected, it didn't compare to the shock of that time" (Root)

… Root continues to talk excitedly words that I don't understand one bit about. Talking about men this and women that, I just don't get what's happening anymore. Someone please tell me.

"The ultimate sensation a person of the same sex provides, that love! I trembled in excitement! When connecting bodies, there's nothing compared to the one between men!" (Root)

Can you… please stop your speech already? My ears are rotting. My brain is also in danger.

"From what I see, Makoto-kun is inexperienced right? Don't worry, I also love those as well. If you want your first time to be with a woman, I am fine with becoming a woman you know? No matter which body, I have the confidence of captivating you in a single day!!" (Root)

What are you saying?! Don't blush your pure white skin! I don't get you! Don't be so insistent, it just makes me feel sick! I'm not inexperienced! I-Inexperienced? Uhm, not having experience right? Ah, he is certainly right.

"I refuse!" (Makoto)

I stand up from the sofa and put my distance from him. Luckily, he isn't chasing. Instead, he retracts his body and sinks his body deeply into the sofa. He intertwines both

hands in front of his abdomen.

“Being prejudiced is not good, Makoto-kun. My heart is that of a man and a woman you know? Just try it at least once, and if it doesn’t work, I will just give up” (Root)

You can still say that after your speech about captivating me in a single day?! Your sparkling eyes, just stop them…

I don’t intend to repudiate homosexuality. I don’t but, to coerce someone that’s not interested in it, I reject that! I don’t have any interest in that aspect!

“… You, what are you saying-desu no?”

Oh.

You didn’t need to return now, you know.

Mio, your timing is good, or more like, bad?

“Ah, the black Onee-san. Thanks for the tea and fruits” (Root)

Root is being Root and just getting happy looking at the contents of the tray Mio has.

“… What were you intending to do with Waka-sama?” (Mio)

“N? I was just seducing him a bit though?” (Root)

“Lovers’ tiff?!” (Mio)

“Because he is free. There should be no problems in me putting myself as a candidate right?” (Root)

“…”

Mio silently places the tray to the side. There was tea for the number of people here and cut fruit in a plate on that tray.

“Eh? If you leave them there, I can’t reach them though” (Root)

“Tomoe-san, this thing seems to be a dragon. Is there a problem if I do him in?” (Mio)

Pretty impressed that she could tell he is a dragon. After being told and concentrating on it, I can certainly feel it a bit though. But to see through him immediately, as expected of Mio’s instincts, terrifying.

“Well let’s see, this has to do with Waka’s chastity. We can’t let that happen. Mio, of course we do it” (Tomoe)

“Ara ra? Tte, even Makoto-kun?!” (Root)

I can tell that those two are going into combat stance. And I also do the same. This is one guy I have to repel. 100% for my sake.

“Root, I will at least hear your last will. There won’t even be bones left, so I will engrave it in your grave” (Tomoe)

“The meat of a superior dragon might be tasty. I will at least let you be of some use” (Mio)

“This is a threat like no other. I am sorry but, I will be bringing my all to eliminate you” (Makoto)

“W-Wait one second! Three at once is impossible. In the

first place, today I didn't come here to fight! Come on, calm down you three. Sorry, I messed around too much. Please let me fix the misunderstanding seriously. I beg of you, please" (Root)

Root lifts both hands and signals his surrender.

Just how serious is he really?

It's the first time I have met someone of his type after all. It's hard to infer his true intentions. Moreover, it is hard to believe in that serious face as well.

"If it's about your out of order inclinations, we have already heard enough of it. There's no need to explain it" (Tomoe)

"To try teaching Waka-sama such a dubious preference, there's already no need to clear the misunderstanding. I don't care. Your extermination is already set-desu" (Mio)

"No well, it was just a bit of skinship you know. Just touching has filled me already, so I won't say it anymore. I want to talk regarding the topic of Adventurer Guild master and things like that, with the otherworldler Makoto-kun" (Root)

"… About the guild?" (Makoto)

Ah, the joke about being the Guild Master huh. There's no way a pervert like this is the top of an organization. It may be a lie, but there's still more?

Tomoe, Mio, and I have registered just in case. And Toa-san and the others are also members of that organization. If he wants to say something, I will just hear him out.

“That’s right, about the guild” (Root)

“Understood. If you are not going to mess around anymore, I will hear you out” (Makoto)

“Waka!” (Tomoe)

“Waka-sama…” (Mio)

“Mio, I don’t mind if it’s already cold, so bring the tea. Let’s hear what you have to say” (Makoto)

We once again sit in the reception 3 to 1.

Root also maintained his serious face and began talking about the Adventurer Guild.

Chapter 105: Thus, The Adventurer Guild Was Born.

“First of all, I am the true Adventurer Guild master. Or more like, I was the one who founded it. A thousand years ago that is” (Root)

“Eh?!” (Makoto)

“What…” (Tomoe)

Root reveals the founding of the Adventurer Guild with a serious look. Tomoe and I show our surprise in our voice, but Mio seems to not be that interested, she doesn’t show much reaction at all.

“I was taught the concept by an otherworldler just like Makoto-kun you see. Well, I had some plans of my own in it too, but I proposed the idea to the Goddess and became the one in charge. She thought of the guild as a system that would make hyumans stronger, a really simple way of thinking. She didn’t reject the idea” (Root)

Plans of his own. Those are words that interest me. Also, otherworldler. As expected, the heroes and I are not the first victims of that Goddess.

If he says one thousand years ago, does that mean when Japan was in the Heian era? Could it be in the era of Fujiwara Michinaga? N? Something bothers me. What could it be?

“In those days, I thought of the structure of the guild diligently. And the otherworldler that taught me the general concept, well, he was my first husband. I heard a

lot of stories from him, and while having fun, we structured the system. Right, if we were to compare my mental state at that time, it would be like the one Tomoe is in currently. Anyways, learning about his concept, studying, and reproducing it, was so fun" (Root)

Yeah, I agree. The case comes from a 3rd party, so I can strangely understand him.

In short, just like how Tomoe was hooked into period drama, Root was hooked into creating the Adventurer Guild. And so his world widened, and in a sense, created a dangerous organization that's not affected by the influence of the country. When there's the Goddess and a superior dragon backing it up, the hyumans against it must have been minimal. After all, it's a Goddess.

"The otherworldler who became my husband, in those days was a swordsman that was sung as a hero in Elysion. And I was his wife and companion. I was also able to get the Goddess' cooperation, so after creating the system, it permeated in the hyuman society incredibly fast. After that, by changing my appearance, I was able to become the Guild Master successively for several generations" (Root)

The founder, and the current master huh. That's quite impressive.

"The 1st generation master wasn't Root's husband?" (Makoto)

Even though his husband sounds like he should be the one holding the leadership there. He didn't want to become the master?

“Instead of those things, he was more into women and alcohol. After achieving the name of hero, he didn’t do anything resembling work. Well, being a hero itself has meaning as an idol, so in a society where the warring time passed, it is probably more convenient for him to not be doing anything” (Root)

‘In peaceful times, there’s no need for heroes’ is what he is trying to say, maybe. Certainly, even in the history that I learned in my world, there’s not much written of the heroes after their achievements in war. There should be information if you search for it, but there’s some of those heroes that just pass it leisurely. Probably because heroes, who gather people’s attention, would pose as hindrance for the powers that want to gain influence postwar.

And it seems that Root had a pretty wild sexual drive since olden times. Looks like he doesn’t think much of his husband having relationships with other women. N, maybe in those times they already had polygamy?

I feel like he will be give me an out of tangent answer, so I refrain from questioning. Let’s just hear what he has to say quietly.

“The Adventurer Guild exists in the whole world and it serves as a place to solve people’s problems. And it also provides the card that shows the level of the members and has several other functions, as well as many other benefits. And well, didn’t you find it strange?” (Root)

“Hm?” (Makoto)

“The guild card that surpasses the effectiveness of some

magic tools, and the word level. These are concepts that come out from games in your world, aren't they? Then why is it that you were easily able to accept the existence of such an organization?" (Root)

"T-That is…" (Makoto)

I certainly thought that this was a game-like world. But I experienced magic before that, and I heard the terminology level and class. I thought that was the preamble of this world. Now that I think about it, I accepted it because of a strange reason.

"'Because it's a parallel world', isn't that what you thought? That's why you were able to accept things that were totally out of norm, like multistoried wooden constructions. And that's why you accepted the word Adventurer Guild just by hearing it" (Root)

"… Yeah" (Makoto)

"Well it is true that for some reason, Makoto-kun and the other people that come from parallelworlds are able to accept the existence of an Adventurer Guild pretty easily. Even though in your world, it is obviously an organization that doesn't exist. I think that's pretty interesting" (Root)

'Yup yup', Root nods several times in an interested manner.

"I just can't understand it. From what I have heard, it seems that you used the otherworldlers information as a standard to create the guild, but you didn't show muchinterest in managing the guild, and it doesn't seem

like you wanted to be an adventurer either. To create an organization like the Adventurer Guild just to kill time, I feel like it is a bit too intricate for that" (Tomoe)

Tomoe cuts in. I see, now that she mentions it, Root didn't mention that he wanted the guild to be made this way, or that he wanted to become an adventurer. It is natural to think that the scale of things is a bit too far for a time killer.

"No well, it was mostly for fun. A time killer. I'm a monomaniac after all. Thinking about how to make the guild and trying each thing one by one, was truly worthwhile" (Root)

His specs are uselessly high. A monomaniac that did it only to kill time, that's pretty impressive. I am jealous.

"But, you did say you had your own plans right? What was that-ja?" (Tomoe)

"Your ears are sharp. I feel like Makoto-kun might hate me for it, so I don't really want to say it though" (Root)

He was probably thinking about something pungent. In the first place, for a person that says he doesn't want to talk, your face is telling me that you are brimming with motivation to talk about it. He probably wants to see my reaction.

"If you want to talk about it anyways, just say it at once. Also, don't look at Waka. You will dirty him" (Tomoe)

Tomoe, isn't Root an ex-colleague of yours? No, a boss-like existence? And you are already treating him like dirt. That's nice, please continue doing so.

“Yes yes. Well, it isn’t a complicated story. Since a long time ago, the Goddess held the hyumans in favor. However, I valued the world. That’s all there’s to it” (Root)

“Don’t understand. Talk concisely. You have always liked talking in enigmatic ways. There’s no need for that now-ja” (Tomoe)

“… It is an effective way that helps the other party get interested and urges their understanding though. Oh well, got it. Meaning, the Goddess’ favor was so excessive that the hyumans would increase in numbers and grow prouder, and it was easy to predict that this would in time destroy the balance of the world. And that’s why, to restrain this, this was one of the things I did. I said this before but, more than half of the reason was because of my hobby” (Root)

“A restrain for the increase of hyumans? But the guild urges the growth of hyumans right? Isn’t it actually fostering it then?” (Tomoe)

“That’s what’s called ‘looking at the tree but missing the forest’. Listen, you receive a card when you register at the guild. This cardshows you your own level and rank, but it is essentially only a numerical value to denote your current situation. When you are indicated with a rank and numerical value, hyumans tend to aim for higher heights. As expected of people that have been based of humans, they are a race with strong greed” (Root)

“…”

Well, sorry for having strong greed.

“If your level increases, you will get stronger. Of course, even without knowing that number, by defeating mamonos and doing war, you will not see the number, but it will certainly show the changes. But just by making it a simple to understand number, their enthusiasm increases. And so I, for the sake of speeding up that enthusiasm, intervened in this world’s system. Well, I only made it so that the power absorption they gain from others is increased though. In words that Makoto-kun would understand better, it is like increasing the experience gain” (Root)

Seeing the numbers will make them more enthusiastic. I think that’s true. I can’t deny it. There are times when people don’t continue to put in work because it is hard to see the improvement and that affects their spirit. But what Root did is like cheering for their growth. So where in that does it show any restrain effect?

“I see, so that’s how it is. What a devious thing to do” (Tomoe)

But it seems that Tomoe understood what Root was trying to say. Is it the difference between humans and dragons, maybe?

“In that case, there would be hyumans that get adhered to their level and rank. Levels show their own strength, and ranks would increase their benefits in the guild after all. And obviously, there would be adventurers that would spread their name by having a high level, and younglings that admire them and register in the guild. There were some that have become knights or kings and have thrived” (Root)

That's a nice story. Work hard and succeed. I have also thought about increasing my rank aiming to get more functions from the card after all. My level doesn't show any signs of increasing, and after becoming a merchant, my heat has cooled down a bit though.

"… You are honest huh, Makoto-kun. It makes me feel ashamed of my own shrewdness. You have the face of someone that says: hard work leading to success is a good thing" (Root)

"Is that bad? Isn't that something anyone would think?" (Makoto)

"Fufu, let's continue. Having their enthusiasm for achievements overflowing, wishing for promotion, a stage where money is not completely necessary and you just need physical strength and magical power to begin; the amount of adventurers aiming for that dream-like situation increased. Become stronger, famous, richer. If there were no Adventurer Guild, kindly speaking, those kind of people would work as freelancers or become ruffians. Badly speaking, spare troops for rebels. They originally don't have much capital, so their existence was at the end of the ropes, that's why they interpreted the guild way too favorably" (Root)

"But by enclosing a portion of the ruffians in the guild as adventurers, the ruffians that persevere in their bad doings won't be able to act as easily. That means it would be serving as a way to better public order, isn't it?" (Makoto)

That's something good. I can't see the conclusion of this.

“There’s was probably that kind effect as well. There’s nobles in the guild too after all. But what’s important is that the hyumans that only look at the future, automatically thin out” (Root)

Thin out? What does he mean? It sounds pretty dangerous though.

“Excess will destroy one’s body. Ruffians, freelancers, dreaming younglings as well. Aiming for success, they become strong, and somewhere along the way, they miss their footing at a step. Levels, ranks, rewards; there are truly a lot of adventurers that have lost their lives in the requests of the guild. Even after a thousand years, there’s not much of a difference. In those, there were some that had good luck or were uncommonly wise and were able to rise. Those are the successful ones. Their existence works as advertisement and calls more people in. For successful ones to be more than the failures is impossible in current society, so there’s uncountable amount of corpses beneath the successful ones. Nicely speaking, the ruins of dreams” (Root)

“Well, there are people who have excessive spirit and fail, but after some time people learn to balance that out. So is there really an effect like thinning them out? Cause well, the country is currently filled with hyumans, isn’t it?” (Makoto)

“And, the number of adventurers in that equation is extremely low. There are many times when just one mistake leads to death. Taking into account the demons that have held hostility since beginning of times, there are now also demi-humans who are showing opposition. Its proof that the thinning out is showing its effect. After

all, no matter how you put it, numbers are power. If there were no Adventurer Guild, the current world would probably be more peaceful. In exchange of everything else disappearing except the hyumans and the subordinated demi-humans though" (Root)

"But to say that everyone goes mad with greed. Even they should know when to pull back" (Makoto)

"The ones that are able to act in that way are the successful ones, Makoto-kun. Even if they are unable to become kings. Using the guild system in an efficient way and obtaining a reasonable income, that is already a good enough success. You are free to believe me or not, but misjudging by a little step is how hyumans are. In fact, there are many people registering as adventurers every day, and yet, the amount of adventurers in itself hasn't increased that much. If we take into account the time when the Goddess disappeared, it actually decreased. People that keep dreaming about the wasteland, labyrinths and quick cash, die in amusing ways" (Root)

No way. To think that the Adventurer Guild that serves as support for the adventurers is actually a system that fans them in order to thin them out…

"Just, I don't want you to misunderstand. If everyone was as you said, knowing their own limits and modestly growing for the sake of their future, the guild would have contributed in that, and in a different sense, it might have served as a catalyst for a peaceful world. But in reality it didn't happen that way, moreover, not only hyumans, but also other races began joining as well. There were several things I didn't expect. Frankly speaking, the Adventurer Guild is an organization that

supports the greed of people, for good or for bad. Fortunately, the problems of the hyuman society don't disappear and the requests never run out. The people that don't become adventurers and decide on going for a different path, when they see that there's danger in the objective they are trying to accomplish, there are times when they buy the result with money. And the Adventurer Guild accepts those requests. It is truly well made right? That they are thinning out just as planned was because the adventurers mistook the way of using the guild" (Root)

It may be a bit different, but maybe it is because power is just power, it depends on the person itself to know how to use it. As a result, for the long time of one thousand years, adventurers were caught in the trap of Root and were drawn in just to burn.

"… I see. Interfering with the system of the world. Using the increase of adventurers as a whole to make a simple and irregular pact with the world huh. In short, the increase of growth begins to work after a while of becoming an adventurer" (Tomoe)

"Tomoe, your head has gotten better. That's right. I am versed in pacts after all. I tampered with it a bit. By the time they get used to it, their growth will probably accelerate as well. It also makes it easier for them to die, so that makes it even more amusing" (Root)

"In short, increasing levels makes your base power rise right? Ability and experience, as well as talent, are not values that are taken into account in levels, is what you are trying to say. Tch, it feels vexing that I am losing to Mio, but if that's the truth of it, there's no real need to go

through the trouble of raising it huh" (Tomoe)

"Well, that's how it is. It varies depending on the race as well, so it doesn't mean you can't beat them. It is only like a reward for the strong ones by the world after all. No matter if you are a saint or a villain, as long you are able to kill someone of your same capacity, you will be able to obtain strength equal to that. It is like the complete opposite of the Goddess' blessing, so it is better to not believe in it blindly. There's no merit in despairing with the words talent and instinct, so I introduced the levels and even brought in the job system, as well as the function limit of the card depending on rank. I really worked hard you know. Well, right now there's no one that has reached the highest level though. And so they are still dancing in my palms. By the way, the peak level is 65,535. My husband made a fervent speech about it being a man's romance or something like that, so I decided to put it that way" (Root) <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/65535_(number)>

Leaving aside if I actually believe everything, I have understood most of what Root is trying to do and say. Right now Tomoe seems to be using special terminologies and words of unknown meaning as she does arguments with him, but regarding that, I practically don't understand anything.

If you are an adventurer that has self-control, that place will support you normally.

If you go there filled with greed, as long as you don't have incredible luck or talent, it will be a trip straight to your grave.

Or so it seems. Now that I think about it, the wasteland was exactly that kind of place. Just by arriving there, you are without a doubt the latter type of people though.

But well, now that he points that out, it is truly that way. This world gives the feeling that the Adventurer Guild already fits in, and in truth, it has continued existing for a thousand years. It is older than some countries. I don't think there are mediation offices or enterprises that exist in Japan since the Heian Era, so I can imagine just how powerful is the Adventurer Guild. A multistory building in a wooden construction huh. It really is strange.

For example, the Merchant Guild's information relay is being improved daily, but it doesn't reach the level of the Adventurer Guild at all. I remember I read about a merchant that saw the Adventurer Guild and thought of making a cooperating organization and that's how the Merchant Guild was created. It certainly does feel that the Merchant Guild which has been influenced by the country, towns and powers, actually "feels like" it's an organization created by hyumans.

The Adventurer's Guild abnormal speed in information relay is enough to make me doubt if there actually existed mailing system in this world. If it weren't for the fact that the wasteland's Adventurer Guild is a sub-branch, the existence of Tomoe and Mio could have spread through the world in a matter of days. In Tsige, Rembrandt-san helped by moving some strings in the shadow. His wife and daughters were in a precarious situation at that time, and yet he did all that. I really can't find words to express my gratitude. After that, even the Adventurer Guild saw the achievements of Tomoe

and Mio who accomplished the requests of the wasteland with no problems, and how important those two were, so they have helped in order for the information to not leak to the outside. Well, the dragon in front of us probably knows clearly about Tomoe and Mio as well as my level though. Seriously, he talks nonchalantly about information of my world. Just how many otherworldlers has he met?

… N?

AAAAhhhh!!

This is it!! This is what has been bothering!!

“Root!” (Makoto)

“N, what is it Makoto-kun? Feel like making a pact with me? I’m so happy” (Root)

“Wrong! About your first husband! You said it was a thousand years ago right?” (Makoto)

“Yeah, I did say so. And what about it?” (Root)

“Why did a human from so long ago know about Adventurer Guilds?! Not only games, there weren’t even stories written with such settings!” (Makoto)

I was even thinking about Heian Era and Fujiwara Michinaga, and yet, why is it that I wasn’t able to notice that point?!

“Fumu, so you were bothered by that huh. It is fine to explain to you, but thinking about it in an Urashima Tarou-like way would be easier” (Root)

“Like what? It is a pretty important matter for me, so please give me the details!” (Makoto)

“Root, Waka is asking you. If it is fine to explain, then do so from the beginning” (Tomoe)

Maybe, just maybe, one of the probabilities that I have been thinking of will disappear. This is a critical moment. Telling me to think in an Urashima-like way and be happy with such an explanation, there’s no way I can accept it!

“Okay. If you go so far as to say that… Tomoe, you also asked me, so please bring out something like a blackboard. You know right, a blackboard” (Root)

“Don’t take me for a fool. The point is you need something like a board for explaining and writing tools right? Wait for a bit” (Tomoe)

“Counting on you. Doesn’t matter who, at least one of you please listen to me till the end okay? If both of you drop out, I will attack Makoto-kun (in a sexual meaning) got it? It’s a promise okay?” (Root)

What a scary thing to say. But to belittle those two… In our side we have the instinct type genius Mio-san…

She fricking went to sleep. No wonder she didn’t say anything. Looking at Mio pleasantly sleeping, I sigh.

One person has already dropped out huh.

This is the worst. There shouldn’t be a problem with Tomoe who was talking complicated stuff. Shiki might also come back anytime soon.

While waiting for Tomoe, Root praised the tea and fruits as we exchanged idle talk. I waited for what he has to say about the time inconsistency.

Chapter 106: The Spider's Thread. Tomoe Grieves.

I regretted it.

After only 5 minutes in, I already began regretting it a lot.

About the contents Root was talking and the explanation drawn out.

Because it was practically at an incomprehensible level already. Right now he is smoothly writing down a mathematical formula I can't understand at all.

"That's why, when people fall to this world, it is normally done in this manner…" (Root)

Root draws a circle on a part of what he wrote while continuing to explain on and on. Tomoe is p-probably still able to follow this. I want to believe that.

"And in the case when it synchronizes from A to D, the phenomenon called transfer happens between the worlds. In the cases where a God orchestrates this, there will first be a time division joint…" (Root)

Forever, it is truly continuing on for eternity. Now even the words I can understand are starting to become fuzzy. In the several parts like people, gods, and transfer; they probably still hold the same meaning that I know of.

"… And so, a discrepancy in the world's times will be created and it will become extremely difficult. I think you already understand this part, but the time paradox

created from the flow of time will originate an outbreak of energy, which is an incredibly important problem, but at the same time, the chances of this happening is low…" (Root)

I… What was I asking to begin with?

Uhm…

"And because of the stated reasons, the time passage of this world and the time passage of the original world of Makoto-kun are managed in a totally different manner. This is the reason why my first husband and Makoto-kun know about games and RPGs that have been recently introduced to your world, but…" (Root)

Root looks at me. I didn't understand most of what he said, but I was able to stay conscious. Mission clear.

"So, in the case that I want to return to my original world, is there a chance of success?" (Makoto)

"… You, didn't understand my explanation right?" (Root)

"The moment science and magic began mixing up, I wanted you to understand that there's no way I could get it" (Makoto)

"Eh? Isn't all this science talk? Ah, that's right. Your original world doesn't have the concept of magic in your science" (Root)

Concept of magic in science? It is such a contrary statement that I can't even put my finger on it.

"Are there worlds where science is combined with

magic?” (Makoto)

“Of course. Broadly speaking, this world also has magic and science mixed you know. But it has already been forgotten. In Makoto-kun’s world, just by being able to put out magic power from your body, you would be considered a psychic. In that case, things like warp, time streams, and also world dimensional navigation would be pretty difficult” (Root)

Instead of saying it is difficult, it is in the sci-fi reign already. I remember my physics teacher saying that warp needs an incredible amount of energy so it is impossible. Root also knows that kind of techniques? With magic you can move with teleport formations, so it is probably a part of his everyday life already. When I think about it calmly, it is pretty impressive stuff.

“Leaving aside magic and science for now… Tomoe probably understands, so I will have her resume it and explain it to me later” (Makoto)

“Waka, I honestly didn’t understand all” (Tomoe)

What?! Then there’s no way I can understand it. In the middle of it, I even though he was playing around with me.

“Should I explain it one more time, in an easier to understand way?” (Root)

“No, it will probably be the same. *I think the line I don’t understand is just several minutes late*. I can understand that it was incredibly advanced talk, so I would be happy if you were to answer my questions concisely” (Makoto)

＜Literal translation of this. わからなくなるラインが数分遅れるだけだと思う＞

Well, he did say to listen to him till the end, but didn't say I had to understand it, so there should be no danger of him attacking me, probably.

"… No helping it huh. Well, there's only been two otherworldlers that have understood this talk after all. Okay. The question was if Makoto-kun can succeed in transferring to your previous world, right? The answer is: close to impossible" (Root)

So there were two. Even though it would probably take me an eternity to just understand 15 minutes or more of what he said.

"…"

Tomoe isn't saying anything. So the answer to my question is: close to impossible, huh. That means, there's a way.

"You are saying, there's a method right?" (Makoto)

"N, it is a bit different. With Makoto-kun's current magic power aggregate amount, transfer itself will practically succeed without doubt. The technique is child's play, so just by studying it there's no mistake. That I can guarantee" (Root)

Eh, isn't he talking in a pretty positive way here? I have been doing archery frequently after all. I think my magic power has increased quite a bit. I still have problems with the amount I can use. I have been studying a decent amount in that aspect since I arrived at the academy

though.

“Then why is it close to impossible?” (Makoto)

“To pinpoint the destination is crazy hard, moreover, there’s the high rate of randomness. Well, if you repeat the transfer a thousand times, you will probably be able to arrive at your original world. Just, there’s no way of knowing which time your original world will be in. The chances of returning to the Japan of your current era, optimistically thinking, is close to 1 in a billion” (Root)

“…”

“Is what I have been explaining to you since a while ago though. Well, if you go about increasing the number of times you can transfer in a single day while thoroughly putting in order the conditions, I think the success rate will be higher than what I mentioned. Regarding how much time it would take to get to that point, even I don’t know though” (Root)

The chances are not zero, but it is close to impossible. Is what he is trying to say huh.

“I see. In short, it is incredibly difficult. I have understood that it is not an objective I can pursue yet in my current state” (Makoto)

“Yeah. Wouldn’t it be a good idea to look around a bit more? I will make it so you can contact me anytime you want, so call me anytime you want a talking partner. If possible, when you are alone” (Root)

Today I learned that you can be both a genius and a pervert. I don’t think I will ever contact him(?) when I

am alone.

Honestly, it would have been better to just think in an Urashima-way and ask him questions on my own. This tired me like crazy.

After Root's words, a curtain of silence descends. Then in less than a few minutes, Root suddenly stood up.

"Well then, since I have already finished my greetings, I will be excusing myself tonight" (Root)

Tomoe sees Root out and leaves together with him from the room.

Ah, that's right. If Shiki were here, it would have probably gotten through him. He is attached to the talks of world travelling after all.

It will be at a later time, but let's have Tomoe tell Shiki what she understood of Root's talk.

I cover the sleeping Mio with a blanket and silently leave the reception room.

Let's think a bit in my room. About what I want to do.

Ah.

AAAAHHH?!

"Ring. That's right, I didn't ask about the thought transmission jamming! I was pretty surprised about the Guild talk after all. Hah…" (Makoto)

Did he give me the slip, or is it that I just didn't ask him.

Damn it…

I still have a long way to go.

◇◆◇◆◇◆◇◆

On the way back from the Kuzunoha Company to the Adventurer Guild, Root and Tomoe were walking in line.

“You guys are pretty interesting. It may be because it is a relationship between someone that hasn’t stood in a high position before and people that have never stood below anyone though. It is quite the amusing master and servant relationship. A master that even when exchanging a ruling pact, he still thinks of them as family. A servant that acts as an elder of sorts, trying to guide her master; a servant that blindly obeys her master; and one that had to go through the trouble of putting a pile below and stand on tiptoes to barely reach the condition of ruling. Fufufu, not a single one of those have been in a slave relationship before. It is truly strange… and interesting” (Root)

Root’s mouth continues to talk. But the warmth in his voice when talking to Makoto is not there and it is more of an indifferent tone.
While saying it is amusing, there was no fun mixed in his tone. It was just like telling his results of an investigation, cold words of an observer.

“…”

Tomoe doesn’t show any special reaction and just followed on Root’s steps.

“What? If you want to ask something, go ahead” (Root)

“… So you noticed” (Tomoe)

“Of course. I was even thinking about talking with Makoto-kun the whole night you know. But your gaze was so annoying that I left didn’t I? In the first place, what was that about not understanding anything? Tomoe, you understood all. If that weren’t the case, I wouldn’t have explained till the end” (Root)

“Right. There are a number of things that… I want to ask no matter what” (Tomoe)

Tomoe’s tone was heavy and hard.

“You said that people are liars and deceivers, and yet, you were lying to your master as well didn’t you? Well, we are both dragon acquaintances, go ahead and ask me” (Root)

“Otherworldlers, humans that have come from the world of origin. As expected, they die in a hundred years or so?” (Tomoe)

“… Yeah, they do. Actually, it is unusual that they live till the hundreds. They seem to get longevity from magic, but even with that, the most they can live normally is somewhere around two hundred years, maybe. More than that… I don’t recommend it” (Root)

The last words of Root had the color of anguish in it.

“I see. So short. Really… short” (Tomoe)

Tomoe whispers the word short several times. It looked like she was trying to permeate herself with the reality she can’t accept.

“There’s nothing we can do about that. I have met with more than 10 humans in my life and have parted with them, but there’s no choice but to get used to it. Every single one of them is charming in their own way, and when I have to part with them, it is truly painful though” (Root)

Root’s eyes look at the distance. Most likely reminiscing.

“Root, you are a very old acquaintance of mine so I will endure the embarrassment and ask this-ja… Is it hard to bear? When Makoto-sama dies, will the world I see return to the dull colored one?” (Tomoe)

“Yeah, no doubt. When I lost my first partner, I was engulfed with an overwhelming sense of loss. To the point that, for a while, I couldn’t see the value of the world I held so important” (Root)

“For the current me, Makoto-sama is my everything-ja. To lose the time I have with him, I just can’t picture it” (Tomoe)

“Right, I understand you. I also think he is splendid. I didn’t think you would make a pact with a person, but honestly, I am jealous” (Root)

“You, don’t understand it. Makoto-sama’s gonna get scared” (Tomoe)

“How awful. Even though I was agreeing with you. And in truth, Makoto-kun is nice. It may be a rude way of saying it but, he is a jackpot. It is the first time that three humans come at the same time here, so the world will change greatly” (Root)

Root's voice turns slightly lively. It looked like he couldn't contain his happiness at having the world change because of the humans' arrival. From his wry smile, he did a complete change into a cheerful expression.

"Change huh. Root, how did you know of Makoto-sama? If you said jackpot, does that mean you checked the other heroes as well?" (Tomoe)

Each word of Tomoe was emitted as if confirming Root. She probably doesn't know if the change of the world will be positive for her or if she should carefully take counter-measures for it. This is the first time she has lived along a human, and this is the most time she has been in society. She didn't know if she could be like Root, who has experienced many turning points in his life and has just accepted them, living his life with enjoyment.

"I learned of him, or more like, about you guys when you registered in Tsige. The 4 digit level you both had that has never happened before. I soon discovered the existence of a third otherworldler. I confirmed the information and sealed it. That's why, when the names of Tomoe and Mio leave Tsige, they remain anonymous. I am truly grateful for you two. Because thanks to that, I was able to learn of Makoto-kun's existence. It is okay to consider the information sealing as my gratitude. Not a human and yet, human; doesn't have talent, and yet, surpasses talent; doesn't worry when killing someone, and yet, when his family is hurt, his heart will suffer. Terribly opaque, vague, his thought patterns and decision making is that of a commoner; and yet, he is walking a

completely different path from a commoner. There's no otherworldler who I have felt so much interest in watching his progress at his side. It really… arouses me" (Root)

"Root, why are you so into Makoto-sama? I don't think it is just because he is an otherworldler though…" (Tomoe)

"It may be a repeat of what you said but, otherworldlers die in about a hundred years. But you see, listen closely okay? We are unable to make babies with hyumans, however, if it is a human, we can" (Root)

"?!"

"True, they do die. But they are able to leave the crystallization of their emotions in our bodies" (Root)

"No way. We live as individuals. In other words, we are separated from the world. No matter if you say they are humans, to be able to make children is just…" (Tomoe)

Tomoe's words tremble in confusion.

"We can actually do it. I haven't had a woman bear my child, but having a child with a male, I have. That's why, I want to be loved by Makoto-kun as a male and female, and I want to love him in return. I want to live beside a human that is so interesting. It is to the point I even want a pact. Well, I do have the public image of a guild master, so I can't stick to him all the time though" (Root)

"I… met the Empire's hero. That thing also possessed excelling power you know?" (Tomoe)

"Ah, him huh. He is not bad either. In terms of how

interesting they are, it would be: Makoto-kun, Empire, and Kingdom; in that order. In terms of danger it would be the same. The eyes of the Goddess to find heroes is as one would expect. Kingdom, Empire, Makoto-kun. She isn't a god for nothing. Well, the empire's hero probably won't live long. He is completely entranced to his own position of being a hero, or more like, drunk at his own position as a special being. For the sake of protecting that, he would easily sacrifice anything. Counting himself. In reverse, the Kingdom's hero has everything hidden inside her. To the point that it is not even interesting. That… will probably rule over the hyumans in a future. Naturally gathering people around her, naturally utilizing people; in that sense, she surpasses the millions. Truly a history engraving hero. I can predict the movements of those two to a certain extent you see. And regarding that, I don't know what Makoto-kun will get into next, so it is pretty appealing" (Root)

Root gives a brief review of the two heroes. He indifferently talked about them, and there was no passion like the time he was talking with Makoto. What Root looks for in an otherworldler is unexpectedness and amusement, this attitude is proof of that. That he didn't show himself to the one with properties of a ruler and the one that doesn't flinch to sacrifice someone, but to Makoto-kun, supports that truth more.

"About the other kids, I have no other choice but to believe you, however, I see, because you can't predict what will happen next huh… Hey, those two wish to return to their previous world? Just like how Makoto-sama wishes in a part of his heart. Do otherworldlers really… want to return?" (Tomoe)

“So next is that huh. As expected, everyone thinks the same way. The answer is no. From the otherworldlers I have met, only 3 actually tried to do it. 1 in every 3, is how I would divide it” (Root)

“1 in 3 huh. Not everyone right?” (Tomoe)

“By the way, the current two heroes don’t wish to return. The Limia hero has been in low spirits recently, but it seems that she got over it already. Seems like she has disposed of the few articles she had of her previous world. She has probably prepared herself to leave her mark in this world. The otherworldlers that think about returning in the beginning, by the time they get more deeply connected to this side, they normally continue their lives here. It is probably the ability to adapt that humans possess by nature. Ah, from the 3 that wanted to return, I don’t know if any of them was actually able to return. Just like I told Makoto-kun, in that group there were 2 that were able to understand what I said, so parting with them was regrettable” (Root)

“What do you think Makoto-sama will do? Being told about the possibility by you, do you think he will begin moving in order to return?” (Tomoe)

“If what I predict is correct, he… will probably not return. Just that, I still don’t much about him yet. Bluntly speaking, I don’t understand him. But instead of an adventure that follows a spider’s thread, I prefer the soft people like you guys” (Root)

“I also think that way. That softness is his strength and also his weak point. But, I don’t want him to lose that. It is not because I don’t want to resign myself to a ruling

relationship, but simply because I want Makoto-sama to remain as he is" (Tomoe)

"What, so you do understand. Then you should be a bit kinder to Makoto-kun. Always showing your back that can do all things, isn't that harsh for the current him? He has his own pace. Within the otherworldlers I have seen until now, he is quite the abnormal one. Especially that mind. At this rate, he will probably bring that magic power which surpasses Gods to his grave, but with just one trigger, it can flip everything" (Root)

Just a bit before reaching the Adventurer Guild. At that place, Root stops his feet and looks straight at Tomoe. In there, there was hope, grief and fear. A deep and complex light that mixed all those.

"Trigger?" (Tomoe)

"That's right. Right now he is bound. Counting the softness that you pointed out not too long ago as well. But on top of that, he is still in his self who lived in the original world. The other two heroes have already separated the original world and their current world and have begun determining their own path. Well, it is not restricted to differentiating. With some sort of trigger, there's the chance he will understand the importance of his own power. That magic power, that strength. Depending on the trigger, he might hold the key for a third choice. A choice that differs from if he will return or not that you are worrying about" (Root)

"Are you saying there's a possibility other than return or not returning?" (Tomoe)

“Come and go. Being able to actually travel between worlds, in other words, a superhuman type of existence. The current Makoto-kun has enough magic power even for creation. And I wonder what kind of “trigger” will awaken it. I am looking forward to it. Just, it is better to not hurry his growth. I don’t know what method you used to stimulate it but, that amount of magic power increase is abnormal. Even from my eyes. If he pushes himself at that pace, there’s the chance that he might break. If that happens, I will be stepping in got it? The way to increase magic power capacity is information that hyumans would go crazy for, but I won’t forgive anyone that uses him as an experimental subject, uses him in such a boring way. Well then, see you again in a near future” (Root)

“… Trigger, huh. If I can avoid a future where Waka simply returns to his world, I…” (Tomoe)

Tomoe realizes that she has totally gotten dependent on the time together with Makoto. Strictly speaking, it wasn’t only to him. It was to Makoto, Mio, Shiki, the world of Asora, and their residents. Since the time she made a pact with him, Tomoe has left behind her body. It is a dependence to this comfortable time.

No matter what she does, it is fun. She is able to engross herself into a single thing. Everything was as Root said. The density of every single day is totally different. Tomoe didn’t want to think that this present will finish in just a hundred years like a festival. No, if it were a festival it would be better. If you wait, it would return again. But the time she passed with Makoto will never return. A once in a lifetime happening.

The more fun it gets, the more she fears of losing it. She never shows it outside, but that's Tomoe's anxiety. That one in a lifetime supreme bliss, if she were to make a child with Makoto, there's a chance of prolonging it. Root seemed to be wishing it, but Tomoe's wish seemed to be a bit different. Root has his own way of thinking, and she decided to not think too deeply on his words.

In truth, if Makoto truly desires to return and asks for Tomoe's help, no matter if it is a ruling pact, she would still try to grant it for him. Her feelings of wanting to be of use for him are also her true feelings after all.

Now, the supreme dragon Root has pointed out a new choice. That is… a way for Makoto to stay as Makoto, and while granting his wish it will also grant Tomoe's wish.

Trigger.

That one word resounds countless times in Tomoe's heart as she returns.

"… Tomoe-san"

In the late night's street, in the street where not a single resident can be seen, Tomoe reacts to that voice that came from herself and stops her feet.

"?!"

"Did you see off that pervert-desu no?"

"… Yeah, that's right-ja. Mio, what's with that appearance? Having a blanket wrapped around you. Don't tell me you really walked all the way here looking

like that” (Tomoe)

“Yeah. Something wrong with that?” (Mio)

“Even if it’s night, I can’t say I admire that. We won’t be staying in this town long so I don’t care, but there will be strange rumors flowing about Waka you know?” (Tomoe)

“… It is fine to just promptly make the people that have seen it to forget-desu wa” (Mio)

For a bit, Mio considered the words of Tomoe about troubling Makoto, but in the end, she decided to stay wrapped and somehow deal with the witnesses. In the depressed face of Tomoe, a small smile returns.

“What a troubling fellow you are-ja no, fufu” (Tomoe)

“The same goes for you-desu wa” (Mio)

“N?” (Tomoe)

“Tomoe-san, even if it is you, if you lose your mind and try to do something to Waka-sama, I…” (Mio)

From the two footsteps, one stops. The feet of Mio that have been following Tomoe from a few ways back, have stopped.

“There’s no way that will happen. But maybe, if I truly were to lose my mind, please smack me and try to return me to my senses. I don’t mind if you are rough” (Tomoe)

“I will not hold back” (Mio)

“Got it. Hey, Mio… thanks” (Tomoe)

“…”

Without turning back, words of gratitude come out from her mouth. And then, an answer of silence. But the will of the two probably transmitted in some sort of way.

Until Tomoe and Mio returned, there were no more words exchanged between the two.

Chapter 107: Before Summer Vacation

Demon general Rona. Secret information and magic expert.

There was no error in that reputation.

Lime, Akua, Eris, Shiki, and Rona. These five people swiftly investigated the Academy's inside and outside. There's no knowing how much of her real skills in information gathering she showed, but it seems that she still showed pretty high skills, mostly in the bad side.

Except for Shiki, everyone else didn't hold any animosity towards their first meeting with Rona, but at their last reports, the three of them were all hostile, no, it was more of disgust. I felt like I wanted to know, and at the same time didn't.

Rona likes nabe as well, so it would be better if Shiki and her were to become nabe friends or something. The only one who treats her as a disease is Shiki.

"Fast doesn't mean better"

"I learned that I prefer a useless one over scum"

"This discomfort… I will cleanse it with a banana"

"It was as usual. She was efficient, but truly coercive"

There wasn't a single good evaluation. If one banana is enough to forgive all the intense emotions they have, I will happily give it to them.

Tricking, seducing, and also killing. It seems like it was literally a whatever-goes overbearing investigation. It was as if she didn't care if it would be discovered.

Since the time Lime was in Tsige, he has been fitting into the town and obtaining information, listening to the talks of the information sellers who he is friends with. That's most likely why he didn't like the way Rona acts.

Akua and Eris who were taught the ways of information gathering by Lime, were also unable to sympathize with Rona and seemed like they were now respecting their current way of doing things.

It looks like Shiki used a reasonable amount of hypnosis, but he did use it in a considerate manner. Rona ignored after-effects and stealth, so it looks like it was no good with her. For her, after-effects on hyumans are not of her business after all. A complicated topic there. Her method is one that prioritizes efficiency, so it is correct in a sense.

That they were able to narrow the related party in just a few days certainly proves that she is efficient and capable. I can't ignore that in my evaluation. We can't have Eva-san living in the company for so long, so resolving this fast is honestly a big help. I also placed some caution in her little sister and had Shiki stick with her, but this also can't stay like that forever.

However, from the related parties that were narrowed, one was arbitrarily killed. Just as the word says, so arbitrary and conspicuous. Thanks to that, the other one is also beginning to act weird. We haven't confirmed any external contact yet, but we definitely must move fast.

To think that instead of a business rival, it would be a coworker sensei that I would be introducing my company's behind the scenes attraction, the underground torture room. Really, out of my expectations.

Moreover, it is someone that I know and have related to. The one who has built up high trust in the staff room, Brait-sensei.

In the end, he went further than the limit time and continued to introduce students to my class. That's why, even I who thought of him as dubious, began to think that he might actually be a good person. And yet, hearing this kind of report, I am scared of turning into a distrustful person. No, more like hyuman distrust.

A full-time teacher in an elite academy with lots of students. He doesn't give the impression of being involved in an organization though.

In 2 weeks, the academy will enter summer vacation.

'Isn't this an academy that trains elites?' is what I wanted to retort, but having heard of the existence of several otherworldlers in the past from Root, I am not really that surprised about the existence of a long time holiday.

Just that, there is knowledge that came from the otherworldlers in this world and yet there's no guns. That must mean magic really does surpass gunfire. Well, it isn't like I know everything about the otherworldlers that came to this world, so this is only mere speculation. It is true that I still don't know the intentions of the empire.

Besides, even when there were several predecessors, it is

surprising that there is no clear information of their existence. We three were the first ones that the Goddess summoned, so the others were just results of accidents and was not made public in this world. Instead of revealing that they are otherworldlers, they all decided that it would be better to just blend into this world and live like that, maybe? I think there is no few amount of people that faced the same kind of hardships I have because of their outward appearance. Also, it seems that the earthlings have a physical strength superior to those of hyumans, so maybe there were also people that were persecuted because of that. The several people that Root didn't divulge their details were probably in the same situation as me.

People that became heroes, ones that became knights under a king, became absorbed in magic and tried to peek into its possibilities, ones that spread their names as adventurers, ones that were called crazy warriors and perished, and even people that passed their life researching baths (probably Japanese).

Everyone lived their life in their own way. But it seems that not a single one of them was able to return.

The talk of the world and so on of Root was mostly undecipherable for me. And even when I asked Tomoe, she didn't understand it either. However, I did understand that the difficulty of the trip is high and that I will need to resolve myself before trying. I also have to keep in mind Asora, as well as Tomoe, Mio and Shiki, before testing it out.

No matter how capable my subordinates are, doesn't mean that the master can do whatever he wants. Just like

when one person in a family does whatever he wants, and somewhere along the way, discontent gathers and the family begins to warp. That's why I have to compensate little by little for the parts of myself that are still lacking.

I have the objective of landing a hit on the Goddess, but in the meantime I have other things like the expansion of the Kuzunoha store, increasing the residents of Asora, and in the future, investigate the movements of the Empire. Now that I know of it, I want to stop their development of gunfire.

The first and foremost task is the forced summoning of the Goddess. This one comes first. It seems that Shiki is also pitching in to help on this subject, so I think this will be solved in time. Doesn't seem like I will need to directly take part in it.

In the future, what's most important is to get surplus. I just can't help but feel like I am falling behind the others after all.

To be surrounded by outstanding people is a good thing. The current me feels like Liu Bei from the Three Kingdoms, not in a positive way. Liu Bei possesses power like that of a rook, however, he doesn't have a sharp brain like Zhuge Liang. But it isn't like Liu Bei used all the ability of his subordinates for himself. I don't have as much virtue as him, but it is fine to just do my best in my own way to get stronger.

The first thing I have to learn is already decided. I am in a standpoint where I administrate Asora and the company. That's why I have to learn the decision making

and cautiousness in order to protect them. Fortunately, I don't need to be adventurous, I just have to act steadily and the Kuzunoha Company will definitely grow. The intuition that a merchant should normally have when one obtains a store, I still haven't gotten it yet. Because I have practically never had any problem related with the company after all. I shouldn't be thinking about gaining more than what I have, but about how to crush the problems before it causes damages.

For example; this time's case, if it were Tomoe, she would probably have Brait-sensei swim around for a while and bait a bigger fish. But we will be capturing him as soon as summer vacation begins, and have him spill out what he knows. Eva-san and Ruria's safety are at stake here after all.

Judgment and cautiousness, in those points, at the negotiation I had with Rona I think I got a passing mark.

In the current case, after the report, Rona left the academy as if natural because she seems to have finished her business. And so the person called Karen Frost disappeared from the academy. My class will now have seven people, but well, that part is not important. She told me to handle the paperwork in the summer vacation and make it as if she dropped out. Rona intended to just write it as if she died, but thinking about the remaining students, I asked her to erase the part of her death. Rona didn't seem to really care about it, and told me that she would follow what I write in the academy's documents.

"There's really no problem if it's just that. In the Fusk kingdom I will have it treated as death though. If I don't do that, there would be people that would grow

suspicious after all. But since we have the chance, can you please give me a bit of your time?" (Rona)

With a way of speaking as if saying she doesn't want any reward, she firmly places out an exchange condition. There are no demerits in just hearing her out, and things like seduction and half-assed drugs don't work on me, so I nod at her proposal.

"In these few days I have been working together with your intelligence members, but you see, well, they are quite the pure people. They are capable, but they are not utilizing their skills to their best. I do think it is normally a necessary emotion and way of thinking, but in the intelligence world where your objective is to gather information in the deepest of waters, ethics and morals are just in the way. If you think about what's best for your company, you should put underhanded methods as an option as well" (Rona)

"Thanks for the advice" (Makoto)

"Also, it seems it is true that you don't make distinctions with demi-humans. Your clerks, intelligence members; there really was no person who was concerned about races. From the ones I have seen, you are the strongest of hyumans so far. If you so wish, I can even make it so you can directly meet with the demon lord-sama" (Rona)

"The demon lord-sama that makes the hearts of people tremble? I am happy to hear that offer. In a future, I definitely would want to" (Makoto)

"However, those two brown skinned demi-humans and your follower Shiki, they are existences that will bring

you harm. This is a pure warning from me since I have taken a liking to you. Cut your ties as soon as you can" (Rona)

"Akua and Eris, and also Shiki? The three of them are being a big help to me though?" (Makoto)

What pure warning is she talking about? Does Rona want me to doubt my own friends?

"You may not know, but those two are Forest Onis, atrocious demi-humans. Because of their combat power, there were people that suggested inviting them to the demon army, but they are a race that hates working under someone. They splendidly cut us off. They probably slipped into Tsige and made contact with Kuzunoha Company, but they will someday definitely betray you. Also, Shiki. Just by being a male, Shiki must be a follower that you can trust, but he is being possessed. Seeing him together with the Forest Onis, I finally noticed it" (Rona)

"Forest Onis. And Shiki is being possessed?" (Makoto)

Ah, I see. It seems that she has noticed Shiki's true identity and is having a weird misunderstanding.

"I don't know his name, but he is a Lich that doesn't follow hyumans nor demons. A Lich normally can't possess someone, but he can do it. He is someone that can kidnap someone at whim and practice inhyuman experiments on them or impersonate them. The demons call him Larva. No matter if it's the information network of Kuzunoha Company, I thought that it was just too strange to know so much information about me, but if it's

a person that has been possessed by Larva, the story changes. I have met him several times in the past, and there have been times where we have been enemies or allies. What I can say for certain is that he is someone that you can never believe in. Seeing that you are so accepting of the demi-humans is something extremely fantastic in the eyes of us demons. That's why, Raidou, be careful of them. If there's a time when you need the help of us demons, contact us. If you use the aria that is written in this paper, you will be able to contact me directly. I will assist you" (Rona)

Saying that, Rona gives me a single paper. It is conscientiously decoded in a language easy for hyumans to read, and there was a peculiar thought transmission aria composed in it.

The moment I saw it, I was about to let out a voice of surprise, but I was somehow able to hold it in and receive it silently. When Rona saw me putting the paper in my pocket, she smiled satisfied and left the room. I probably won't meet her at Academy Town anymore.

This thought transmission aria… might be the one Tomoe was searching for. If I have Tomoe, Mio and Shiki check it out, they might discover something.

I think Rona tried to make me have doubts of the Forest Onis and Shiki, and put the demon race in a favorable position. If that's really the case, she is a scary individual I can't lower my guard from. This time, because she misunderstood Shiki's situation, there was no fear of me being led by her words. But depending on the situation, Rona's words sound incredibly convincing in my ears. About the Forest Onis and Shiki, she mixed some real

traits and truths, and warped the conversation in a direction that she wished. I need to stay cautious when talking to her if there's a chance in the future.

In any case, my situation differs from that of full-time teachers, so I am not tied to the academy. That's why, while thinking about how to pass my summer vacation, I checked the inventory of the store.

◇◆◇◆◇◆◇◆

In the time soon to be summer vacation.

The academy was suddenly wrapped in a merry atmosphere. There will obviously be a lot of students that return home, but the students that have no classes now, will have free time.

Summer vacation. What should I do?

Those kind of conversations can be seen all over the place. It was the same for the modern Japan and in parallel world schools. Hanging out with friends, going on a trip, helping out the family, training their own skills. The way of passing the long time holidays for the students is important and it isn't that different.

The nobles and merchants return to their households and participate in social gatherings. There are many occasions where they have already prepared a special event beforehand, and many return home. Of course, in this period, the noble's dormitory and the advanced class dormitories get pretty busy.

However, there were two that were walking in the halls in a really calm manner. The other students and staff

members are running around, and yet they were continuing their pace onto the library.

“At this time there are a lot of people returning so it is pretty hectic huh. This year we are fine though”

“Papa was crying right. ‘Why are you not returning immediately?!’ he said”

The ones exchanging words were the Rembrandt sisters that had just returned to school. They didn’t have any plans of returning to their homes in this summer vacation, and were able to take things calmly.

The girls were walking while doing a pretty normal conversation, but most of the students that were walking in the corridor like them, shrank their shoulders when they saw them. Their expressions were those of a scared small animal, as if waiting for an incredibly scary thing to pass through.

There’s a reason why the Rembrandt sisters are beautiful and were yet feared in this way.

Before returning from school, those sisters were the worst kind of students. In the required classes they attend when they wanted, and in the practical skills one, they crush anyone that they don’t like; on top of that, they flung their influence as an economic power. They possessed the same skills as scholarship students, so their bad nature stood out even more. If they have their eyes on you, you wouldn’t know what they would do. That’s how those two were. After all, there’s even rumors that said their father obtained the first-class noble’s dormitory admission by buying in gold a peerage from the Aion

Kingdom, and in truth, they are in the noble's dormitory. It can't be helped that they think common sense won't work.

After their return, it was as if completely different people were naming themselves in the same way. The girls showed sincere attitude at the classes, were welcomed by the teachers, and the students were bewildered. That is the current situation of the sisters. Well, there are many students that think they are people who have taken their shape, and many maintained their distance from them.

Those same girls were always thinking about how to repay their lifesaver and sensei Raidou, and actually, they have already repaid him in a time he didn't know of.

It was something that happened a few days ago.

The student mob that came to confess to Raidou also shrunk back at the appearance of those two. But if Raidou didn't dislike it and actually felt happy about being confessed by girls of age they would just be getting in the way, that's why the sisters didn't want to make a mistake and endured it. They have occasionally taken meals with Raidou and learned that he was troubled by their annoyance, and after knowing of his feelings about it, the two of them nodded and began moving.

Several of the students that confessed and got rejected, Sif and Yuno whispered this:

"If you are thinking of marrying him, it will be troublesome if you don't get along with us as well. You have the resolve to do that right? Of course, we won't forgive a single trace infidelity"

“If you want to marry Raidou-sama, you should be careful. If it’s a boring household, papa might crush it and make you servants. We should at least get our families know each other, right?”

The results were immense. The ones who said these words were not the graceful Sif or the cheerful Yuno, but the two who were clad by the same air as their reputation. That must have influenced the action of the students a lot.

That rumor didn’t spread to the public, but between the female students that were thinking about confessing to Raidou, it spread incredibly fast. Until now there had been no risks in confessing to Raidou, but now it had become dangerous in an instant.

The number of confessions to him decreased at a fast rate. Seeing the relieved face of Raidou, the sisters were simple mindedly happy about it. He himself thinks that this is because of people’s rumors, and hasn’t noticed that it is the work of the sisters.

And so now, Sif and Yuno were heading to the library exactly regarding Raidou.

Without getting lost in their promised destination, they continued on to the grand library and find a desk where a mass is gathered.

“So we were the last ones huh. Even though we are newcomers, sorry” (Sif)

“Next time we will come faster okay, senpais” (Yuno)

The two of them already knew that they would be

gathered here and apologize. This is also something that one wouldn't expect from their previous reputation, but for the members that have been together with the sisters in the same class, they have already gotten used to it and stood up from their seats to receive the two of them.

"Don't worry, everyone just got here. Sorry for calling you out here"

The one who voiced out was Jin. The people here were seven in total. The students that are in Raidou's class. Aside from Sif and Yuno, the others are scholarship students and this year they don't have plans of going back home.

Today the seven of them were gathered like this, obviously because of Raidou's class which they all share in common.

"I don't mind. We are also worried after hearing of the next class after all" (Sif)

Yuno nods at Sif's words. The lessons of Raidou were unexpectedly intense and if there's a chance to prepare for them, it is not bad to take it, is how they think.

"In the next class, the chances are high that Sif and Yuno will be participating in the enjoyment lecture. The two of you are strong even when you have just recovered after all. You trained in Tsige to get back in form right? As expected"

While suggesting their seats, Amelia begins the talk. She proposed this gathering because of Raidou and Shiki's hinting, and everyone agreed to it.

“Enjoyment lecture…”

Sif and Yuno make a wry smile. In those expressions, there was expectation and within it, undisguisable fear.

“A torture that goes by that name. Here, take this. This is the report we presented to Sensei. We didn’t even get half out of it. Because you know, that lizardman called blue lizard-kun wasn’t serious at all. It can be said that this was the obvious result”

“It must have been incredibly strong. To think that five together didn’t even measure up”

“Those lizards are all high level. In terms of physical strength we can’t even compare, and the magic arias are also short to a crazy extent. He avoids the arrows as if he could see the future”

The boy that uses a dagger to fight in close combat and inflict abnormal status spells, Daena, lifts both hands as he continues saying he has given up hope. In the gathered students here, he is the only married one.

“On top of that, he even uses his tail to fight in a characteristic way, and his weapon skills are top notch too. There’s practically no moment where our attacks landed properly. In present, we don’t have a choice but to do a combination attack with me, Jin and Daena, but…”

Calmly analyzing the situation is Misura who has a one handed sword just like Jin. He excels in support magic, and specializes in sword arts that uses self-defense as its core. Just like Jin, he is also a swordsman but his aimed

style is quite different. If we place Jin's sword as sharp and accurate, Misura's one would be like a spiked shield.

"His elements are a combination of water and wind. I have never heard of such a lizardman though. And in fact, he has used both water and wind attack magic. There's no signs of him using healing and support magic yet. There's also the chance that it is because we haven't cornered him up to that point"

The one who pointed his elements is the only person here who pursues magic, Izumo. He is a magician specialized in wind, but after taking Raidou's class, he has been able to use several elements and has begun understanding the importance of it.

In essence, Raidou's class' objective is aimed for magicians, but the spells can be considered as a sub. This act is heavily different from the other magic teachers and the common sense that they have known of, but the number one reason is probably because even though Raidou himself is a magician, he has the body strength that surpasses by leaps and bounds that of a warrior. Izumo has taken several classes in other schools, but this is the first time he was told to form an aria while being attacked. Normally, one would put up a barrier and block the attacks while they complete the spell. Raidou also uses barriers. But he said that even though he is a magician, there are times when one uses shields and his body movements to nullify the attacks while forming his arias. He told Izumo to think of such a situation when training. The difficulty is high, but Raidou is actually able to do it. Moreover, he lowers the level to one that even Izumo can catch and shows them how to do it.

Izumo had his pride hurt, and is currently desperately clinging onto the lectures.

Jin, Amelia, Daena, Misura, and Izumo.

The reason why they called the Rembrandt sisters was because they thought the sisters would also have to participate in the rematch against the blue lizard. For the sake of preparing a counter-measure, and also another objective.

“Water and wind. In that case, I can probably participate in the fight as firepower” (Sif)

“In a situation where there are three at the frontline, the bow might be best” (Yuno)

“Yeah, that’s what we first thought. But in that case, the rear guard would have to individually evade the attacks of the lizard-kun right? That’s why I thought that we should have Daena or Misura to the back and have them follow up on the magicians…”

The plan making of the seven continued earnestly. In the middle of their heated discussion, there were several teachers who stopped their feet and looked at that scene pleasantly. And while thinking ‘as expected of scholarship students, their motivation is on a different level’, they left the library.

That scenario played who knows how many times. Finally, the discussion of the seven turns silent.

“… Well, this much should be fine for now. Listen, at any rate, just don’t let the team be wiped out. Find out patterns where we can make direct hits with both

weapons and magic. We will do it as if our life depends on it" (Jin)

"Understood"

Jin wraps it up and the six others agree. They must have made enough counter-measures for Raidou. Their faces were all satisfied.

"And so, it took time but, today we have another topic. Please listen well. It's about the summer vacation…"

Close to evening, the meeting of the seven continued.

Chapter 108: Academy's Summer Vacation

Academy Town is now in summer vacation.

In this time, the students that make up most of the people in this town decrease a lot, so the business activity is curtailed as well, is what one would normally think, but that's not actually the case.

It is especially noticeable in Rotsgard which is in the center. Things like the towns in the area, sightseeing, and teachers that autonomously hold lectures in summer, actually gather students.

Of course, the students that attend the schools of the towns in the area most can't compare to the students here. The teachers take that into consideration and put up their lectures with that thinking in mind. By the way, the only ones doing this kind of lectures are part-time teachers. For them this is a good chance to make pocket money. Maybe the fulltime teachers have work in summer vacation as well, or maybe they glorify the long break; they don't do lectures at summer vacation. There really is not a single one. It has probably become a custom of sorts.

"Even if the extracurricular classes are cheaper than the regular ones… to come to school in summer vacation, that's pretty impressive. I, aside from club activities, didn't attend to any of those"

"That most likely means there's a good amount of people that wish to decrease the distance between others, to

reach them. From our perspective, this is a happy moment as it increases the customers”

“And it seems the Rembrandt sisters didn’t return home. Just before entering summer vacation, there was an unreasonable letter from Rembrandt-san asking to bring his daughters to Tsige”

“And for some reason, there was a letter from his wife in the same day as well. Telling us to ignore the letter of her husband. She revoked his request immediately”

A slight space of silence after.

“Aaah, its summer huh～”

“It’s indeed summer～”

Shiki and I were in the academy’s library investigating. At morning we read books here, check the situation of the store in the afternoon, and from evening to night I hear the reports of Asora and do training. There was a time where I temporarily felt disgust at my useless self, but it was also the time where I decided to move forward in my own way. I think this is most likely because I have been influenced by Jin, Amelia and the other students’ frantic attitude. They and I are different existences, but seeing people trying their hardest to move forward even if a bit, it also encourages me to do my best as well.

“Ah, now that I think about it, at the previous class, Jin seemed like he wanted to say something. Do you know anything about that Shiki?” (Makoto)

“No. He looked pretty cornered, so he probably didn’t have the leeway of saying it out loud. I certainly did feel

as if he was perplexed” (Shiki)

——

At the last lecture before summer vacation, I had them do a mock battle as an enjoyment lecture in the latter half, but for some reason the seven of them were looking at me as if trembling in fear and after, they fell on their knees.

[Sif and Yuno also, try to confirm all that you have learned until now in real combat]

Saying that, I incorporated the sisters in the enjoyment lecture that has been done by the five until now. Maybe they were already expecting this, the students made a formation smoothly.

That’s why I didn’t say anything and nod. I summoned blue lizard-kun, a mist lizard… Since there were more people now, I called for two.

[Let me introduce you. Blue lizard-kun Zwei]

Not presenting themselves and beginning battle would be unrefined, so even though it was a short, I introduced Zwei-kun. However, it was at that instant, everyone stiffened.

It seems that there were even some that were shaking. They have already bettered their foundations and their battle tactics have widened a good amount, and yet they expected to fight 7 against 1? How hyuman-like thinking.

They thought they would be fighting only one as usual, so Jin was the first one to shout out.

“T-There’s more!!”

[Why are you stating the obvious? 7 against 1 wouldn’t be training at all. But well, you certainly do have a point there. You couldn’t even defeat one right? Fumu, I will give you the option of going all 7 against 2 or divide in 4 vs 1 and 3 vs 1]

‘You, what’s the point of even doing that?’

The students’ eyes were clearly saying that.

What’s the point? These guys are pros at group fights you know. 7 against 2 is obviously going to be more difficult. Well, it would be good for them to learn how to coordinate, so it wouldn’t be a bad idea.

“U… Uhm, Raidou-sensei? This is only for reference but, this new one is as strong?”

[Of course. Blue lizard-kun excels in technique, but Zwei-kun excels in strength. Both are excellent warriors. By the way, they specialize in group fights]

Amelia. Isn’t that obvious? Why would I bring two with difference in ability?

“W-well I was wondering if summoning those two isn’t putting a burden in your body or something like that”

[No problem]

It is actually not even a summon. I just open a gate, so it can be one or everyone and it wouldn’t change the burden.

Maybe they still had space to think properly, they decided on dividing. The team distribution was mostly as expected.

Jin, Yuno, Amelia, Izumo.

Daena, Misura, Sif.

Well, in the end, both teams were unable to win. But they were able to fight a whole lot better than last time, and just like that, the class finished.

Jin said he wanted to get advice after the lesson, so I was going to listen to what he wanted but…

“I-I will leave it for a later time” (Jin)

Is what he said with a feeble voice lacking of air and left. And so we are now at present. Since we are already at summer vacation time, it was probably not that important of a talk. Maybe he wanted me to treat him lunch?

If that’s what he wanted, then it certainly would be hard to say after moving so much. It would all go back to the top after all.

———

“At that time only Sif wasn’t collapsed on the floor huh. However, depending on how they handle it, their skills should allow them to enter a further step. Why is it that they are overwhelmed to such a point?” (Shiki)

While voicing out his question, Shiki doesn’t stop reading his book. It seems that he can concentrate his thoughts

on two things at the same time.

“Maybe because they are accustomed? Seeing them like that, I think they will properly make a countermeasure by next time and do one step forward. And well you see, everyone is a good child, so they are most likely more cautious than necessary” (Makoto)

“The second phase huh. If they know that the strength and speed increased, they will certainly complain again” (Shiki)

“I can picture it already. If they handle it the same way as in the first phase, leaving aside blue lizard-kun, Zwei-kun would blow anyone away in a single hit and take them out of the fight” (Makoto)

In the library where there’s only a few presences of people, Shiki and I were talking about the students. The mist lizards also seem to be having fun with it, and it would also help as training for holding back. Well, no idea if it would be of any use in the future though.

If their growth is too slow, it would stress the lizards, so I wish Jin and the others good luck.

“… Raidou-sama” (Shiki)

[Yeah, someone has come. Speaking of the devil huh]

Grasping the presence that is approaching, I change into written communication. A presence I know of.

Putting on a posture where both of us are reading, we wait for them to arrive.

“Excuse me for the intrusion. Raidou-sensei, can I have a bit of your time?”

[Jin huh. What do you need?]

The ones who approached were the students that Shiki and I were talking about. As expected, they were still at the academy, and I see Sif and Yuno here too. Rembrandt-san must be crying. Even if I take into account his wife’s letter, I certainly understand that he wants them to at least return home once.

“I have something I want to consult you about” (Jin)

Hearing Jin talking in a courteous manner, I had an uncomfortable feeling. At the same time, I am surprised that he is able to speak this way.

[Let’s hear it]

“Actually, about this summer vacation, I don’t mind if it is in times where sensei is able to, can you please train us?” (Jin)

[In the middle of summer vacation?]

“Yes. I heard that you are not doing extracurricular lessons. Of course, we will properly pay for the number of times we receive lessons, so please” (Jin)

…

Even though it is a long period holiday, they surely are motivated. I was thinking about using this vacation to concentrate mostly on work and training though.

Moreover, they came and said they would properly pay for the lessons. Impressive. If there were high school students who pay with their own money for summer lessons, it would be pretty out of norms in modern times.

[Is this a consensus from everyone? Is there someone who wants to return home? Especially Sif and Yuno. You should have received a notice from your household to return]

Also, I find it hard to tell Rembrandt-san that I am teaching lessons to the two of them so I can't have them return. I can't tell him. My dad also threw a tantrum saying that he wouldn't let my sisters live alone, even though he is an adult. I think that the affection a dad shows towards his daughters is just on a whole new dimension.

In our household we have the stupidly doting father at full throttle and my mother always had to intervene, so maybe in Rembrandt-san's place is mostly the same.

"From our side as well, please. For the sake of the future, I don't think we are currently strong enough to get a pass in Tsige. There should be no problems in not returning for only half a year" (Sif)

No no, even if your strength doesn't get a passing mark, the Rembrandt household is a merchant one so as long as there's economic power, that should still give you a pass. And Yuno is nodding.

Urgh. How resolved.

If I don't make them return for at least a short term, I feel

like Rembrandt-san will send me a cursing letter again. He is lending me a place to work, so I really want to have an amiable relationship. I feel like I shouldn't take this offer.

[Shiki, how is it? Our schedule is already filled right?]

"No. If it's once a week, we might be able to do it" (Shiki)

Hey.

I was trying to use you as a follow up to refuse them you know?

Now the seven of them are looking at me with eyes filled with expectation. To deal with the students once a week is just…

…

[Understood. Only one a week, got it? Also, Sif and Yuno will return home at the latter half. This is a definite condition okay?]

"Eeh~ Onee-chan and I are the only ones who will be absent?!" (Yuno)

"Raidou-sensei! Please treat us just like the other students!" (Sif)

[No. Your father has asked me. You just recovered, so go home and relief your parents] <R.I.P in pieces Rembrandt>

I could see that two had eyes filled with resentment, but

most of the students were thankful.

Aaah. Well, it should be fine to just do foundation training and summon lizard-kun.

At the appointed day, I leave it to Shiki and I once again return to the books. I have to take advantage of this vacation to the fullest.

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In the time when Raidou was being pestered by his students to do classes in the middle of vacation…

There was one woman in a space of the library where general public cannot enter.

It's the librarian Eva.

When she was told that the danger in the academy was gone, she soon returned to his duties as a librarian. Even if it's a long period holiday, the scholars and researchers, and also the teachers that use the library still don't die out. Since she was absent for a while and there was someone filling her place, Eva-san had to take the place of the librarian while she is in vacation. That's why in this summer vacation she practically doesn't have a vacation at all, but since she feels slightly fulfilled when doing work and she still had something she had to do no matter what in this summer vacation, she didn't feel dissatisfied.

Eva was right now searching for a certain article.

That is something she wanted Raidou to read. Eva was a noble in the past, and yet she excels in her duties as a

librarian. Since the time she marked Raidou, she has been remembering all the books he has been reading and tracing the tendencies of them, she predicts the things he wants to know, the things he must want to know. The books Raidou read were pretty diverse in range, but Eva was still able to make out a number of tendencies. Truly an exemplar librarian.

“Uhm, I don’t need this kind of research instruction. And I don’t need anything prior to that either…”

Researches and essays that are deemed important are normally gathered in an area of the library. Of course, there were essays that were composed at the academy in the past and most of them weren’t publicized and there were research contents that were the same, so they are gathered and the numbers are massive. And in truth, even the specialist Eva is having troubles finding the article she is looking for. She is in a state where she is looking for it covered in dust. There’s no doubt it wasn’t a well-known article.

“Raidou-san has saved my life after all. And he said ‘there is no need for money, so recommend me books’ in a considerate manner, so there’s no way I won’t do that. I will definitely show Raidou-sensei content that he will jump at!” (Eva)

The enormous reward that Eva proposed to Lime was the assets of Ansland. That’s something which lies in the land that has been stolen. Raidou heard that talk with a complicated face, and asked Eva for knowledge instead of money. For him, instead of assets of doubtful existence, he preferred a more realistic reward.

“He looked like he was reading anything, but the topic he was most interested in was the magic aspect. And it was on the magic power application and summoning. After that, he held interest in Kaleneon as well. And he seemed like he wanted to know about geography too. But first, that article” (Eva)

What Eva is searching for is a thesis that a certain professor took his whole lifetime to research and after reaching to a conclusion he was discouraged, a content that didn’t gather much attention, a common essay. However, Eva had a strong inference that this might be one of the things Raidou is looking for. She also has listed up a number of books he might want. Searching for those isn’t that hard. Rather, what she found difficult was that there were so many mediocre essays from no name researchers while she was looking.

“I will return the favor, and from hereafter I have to maintain a good relationship with him. I already have no other to rely on but him and the Kuzunoha Company” (Eva)

The ability of the Kuzunoha Company’s employees, and also Raidou and Shiki. And the other capable people that seem to also exist.

In Eva’s eyes, the Kuzunoha Company is incredibly appealing. A free company with abnormal ability. Just as promised, they crushed the organization powers that were nesting inside the academy. That the gentle Brait-sensei was one of them was something that surprised her in not a small amount. Also, not a single danger befell Ruria. Those were plenty enough results to recognize their abilities.

Right now the scale of their company is small, but it may be because they can't do anything big. But what about the future?

The reckless librarian that wishes for the revival of her territory, she has still not abandoned it.

That's why she wants to be close with Raidou. He has power and his personality is not bad. His company management is going well and he is blessed with capable people. His face is certainly not good, but something like appearance, one gets used to it after seeing it many times, is what Eva thinks. Even if her first impression when seeing him was somewhat bad, so what? It is foolish to judge what's inside by looking at someone's appearance. If the power of the Goddess serves for nothing, then what's the worth of appearance? That is the current sense of value of Eva and Ruria.

Not relying on the Goddess. Her faith that had wavered and disappeared. This kind of people probably have a tendency of losing their attachment to appearance and race.

This is a situation that was brought by the silence of the Goddess. This present condition might serve – a bit – as a tailwind for Raidou, for Misumi Makoto.

Later, the Rotsgard school festival will be coming, and also, the sparks of war that will rise greatly.

The Academy's summer vacation continued peacefully. Just like the calm before the storm.

For the three otherworldlers, their second autumn was

approaching.

Chapter 109: Summer Vacation Part 1 ~ Student ~

This is hell.

Jin wasn't able to accept the reality in front of his eyes.

It is certainly true that they were the ones who asked the temporary teacher Raidou to train them in summer vacation. It is also the last training before the school festival. He also felt sure that there was no better choice than this one for summer vacation.

And so at the second class, at the time close to evening, they surprisingly defeated their arch-enemy Blue Lizard-kun. They got wiped out four times like in the first time and at the fourth time two dropped out, a really narrow victory. But it was without a doubt a victory.

It is the result of moving more offensively and aggressively as the damage increased.

With this they would be able to enter the next stage, is what they thought as they pleasantly accepted the fatigue in their whole body.

The assistant of Raidou, Shiki, gets up, goes to where the Lizardman is and applies recovery magic. And so Jin, Yuno, Amelia and Izumo; healing was also done to the four of them. After that, they are given medicine to recover their magic power and were now in full condition. Truly a scary healing ability. Leaving aside the mental fatigue, the consumed physical strength and magic power returned to a state close to that of when

they began.

“Well then, the remaining time is short, but please have a bout with Blue Lizard-kun in the second phase before the sun goes down. I will be checking out the state on the other side” (Shiki)

Without even a single congratulations, indifferent instructions for the next step come out from Shiki’s mouth.

It didn’t seem like he did any strengthening. ‘So then what is the second phase about?’ the moment Jin thought that and putted himself in combat stance…

Jin gets shocked by the Blue Lizard-kun that’s already right in front of him. Moreover, he was already doing the motion of swinging down with the arm that’s holding the sword.

With an unfinished stance, Jin takes on the diagonal slash. Fast. And it was heavier than before, a lot heavier. In a perfect state it would be different, but this isn’t an attack that he can take on when caught by surprise. At the same time as he is shocked, the sensation of the ground disappears from his feet.

“Oi, you are kidding right? Gu… AAAAaaaa!!”

With his body afloat, Jin looks at Blue Lizard-kun with eyes of disbelief. Jin’s body was send flying to the back without mercy. This power was clearly incomparable to the previous ones. He was grandly blown off to the direction where Amelia and Izumo are.

The strength and speed… are complete different. The

technique is the same, but when the strength put in it and the initial speed change, the sharpness is completely different. When the basic countermeasures can't even keep up, the plan itself crumbles.

"Wai-, Jin get out of the way! An ice lance is coming! Izumo, barrier. Yuno come over here!" (Amelia)

"Understood!" (Izumo)

"Got it!" (Yuno)

Amelia too gets surprised that Jin got blown away. But if her mind stops working, she understands that it would just be checkmate. Looking at the hand of the Blue Lizard-kun that has a shield equipped, she predicts the next attack and gives out directions. The chain of command that changes depending on Jin's state was properly formed beforehand, but…

"T-This is strange. Wasn't it an arrow type?! Influences in the magic power of the area… Could this be Karen's-?!"

"Tte, Karen?! An ice element you say? That?!"

"Wait, fall-"

Yuno's words were in vain.

The four of them were all enclosed in an ice cluster. If it were smashed like that, their life would be over right there, but Blue Lizard-kun didn't move. Because he understands that this isn't real combat but training after all. Slightly sticking out his red tongue, he stabs the large one handed sword into the ground, and with his blue scales basking in the evening sun, he sits down at a

nearby boulder and waits for Makoto or Shiki to return. That appearance was overflowing with composure. And the warped expression in his face seemed as if he was slightly happy at the growth of the students.

On the other hand.

Misura who has sword skills comparable to those of Jin, repeats a hit and away against the enemy while Daena grabs his attention. And also Sif who is matching the position of the two at the front and moving to make sure she is not the target of the Mist Lizard's attacks, attacks mainly with fire element magic. These three were slowly but surely cornering the tough enemy Blue Lizard-kun Zwei. The second lizardman that launches strong attacks fortunately had a better affinity for Misura and Daena than the first one.

It may not be perfect, but they are able to evade. The variety of the attacks is lower than the first and it's easy to avoid. Because of that, they were able to hold the frontline. Of course, Sif has to avoid more powerful magic than the first lizard while attacking with her spells, but the stable battle gave her a calm mind. By the time Jin and the others were doing a victory shout, they were also about to obtain victory.

"Yosh, we got the first victory! Sif, finish the rascal!" (Daena)

But… the words of Daena were a mistake.

The attack that Misura was about to take, stops perfectly in place. In just an instant, before the aria of Sif was finished, another attack came to Misura.

(What…? Something feels different from before…)

The chills that Misura felt were a result from his splendid instincts.

“Gu?!!”

A pain that numbs the sensation of both arms. An attack with incomparable strength. Misura reflexively releases his favorite sword from his hands. At that moment a second attack from the lizard comes. Of course, Misura had no means to defend.

“You… wait there!”

Daena was going to obstruct the attack that the lizard was doing. If he didn’t block this attack, Misura would drop out. He understood that he wouldn’t be able to hold the frontline alone, so he was correct in his decision. It was correct but…

Throwing a spare dagger to make him use his shield and after that attack with his sword. The attack pattern was not bad.

But the thrown dagger was repelled with the lizardman’s tail anddidn’t even use his shield.

The attack of his dagger didn’t reach him. Because the arm that he was unable to restrain was in his way. The shield that the lizard has was blocking him.

“Ge fuu?!”

That’s right. Daena who uses his speed as weapon, was stricken by the shield like a mosquito. An attack

resembling a shield bash. Even from an outsider's perspective it was clear it hurt.

"Goh~~!"

Misura who received a swipe to his chest, was send flying several meters and was unable to move properly. If he were in full shape, he would have done a roll and soon react.

In an instant, the frontline was pulverized.

"… You gotta be kidding me!"

Even so, Sif estimated that as long as her fired spell hits the mark they would somehow win, but that wish-filled spell was easily avoided and her eyes moisten as she sees the lizard coming at her. It can't be helped. Assisting those two in that instant would be way too much of a feat, and it wasn't like she could just abandon her attack or it would make everything up until now a waste. Sif's decision of finishing her aria even in an unexpected situation and trying to obtain victory is a splendid thing and yet…

(P-Please, at least not in the face…)

While putting up her staff against the merciless sword, Sif silently prays. She is a girl after all. Fortunately, that wish was fulfilled and she felt a strong impact from her chest. She lost consciousness there.

Wiped out.

"Fuh~~"

Because Zwei turned ferocious, regrettably, the other party was unable to obtain victory.

◇◆◇◆◇◆◇◆

[Fumu, this time Jin and the others were able to defeat Blue Lizard-kun huh. Congratulations. You did well]

“Thank you very much!!”

“…”

Jin and the others give their gratitude towards Raidou’s blessing, and in the midst, the remaining three were clearly depressed as their head faces down. They were mortified by the fact that Jin and the others got ahead of them. By their selves who are unable to stand in the same height as them. With no words said, they could only look at the situation.

[The remaining time, use it to discuss and do foundation training. Shiki, look after them]

“Understood. Well then, you four continue over here” (Shiki)

Led by Shiki, the victorious party separates. Raidou (Makoto) looks at that scene for a while, and then looks back at the depressed group of three.

[Now then, sorry for this side. You must have been bewildered by your enemy suddenly getting stronger right? That was my mistake. I apologize]

Raidou lowers his head. That seemed to have shocked the students quite a lot, the three of them slightly open their

depressed eyes and are at a loss for words.

“Uhm, you don’t need to apologize. But why did he suddenly become stronger? Can you please tell us?” (Sif)

Because of the sudden strengthening, they were all wounded. Those were substantial wounds. Even if they were recovered completely by Shiki and told it was an accident, she still wanted to know the reason.

“I also want to know. Why was he not using that strength from the beginning?”

“Could it be, we were just being played around?”

Misura and Daena seem to hold the same opinion as well. Raidou was wondering what all this was about, but he makes a big sigh and with a face as if he decided something, he looks at the three and begins to explain.

[I intended to keep this a secret, but let’s count this as an apology from me. I will leave it to each one of you to decide if you want to tell Jin and the others. The Blue Lizard that you have been fighting has strength higher than that of a low dragon]

“?!”

[To match your skills, I was piling up weakening over weakening, have them equipped with crappy equipment, and had them come here. The two that you fought today haven’t shown even 1% of their ability]

“O-One percent?!”

“T-Then in that last one he was serious?!”

Along with the students' shock, Raidou's explanation continues. Shiki is probably in the middle of doing a light explanation of the second phase. But there's no doubt that the three of them have received a bigger shock from the revelation that they have been fighting an opponent that was practically only using his pinky finger.

[The last part huh. You guys would probably be able to defeat the first phase today, so that's the second phase I have prepared]

"Was that not serious? Even with that much power? But why, we still didn't defeat him and yet…"

[That part was my miss. Really sorry. Zwei, come here]

With Raidou's beckoning, from the two lizardmen that were doing the mock battle, the smaller one approaches jogging. And when he arrives close to Raidou, he gets on his knees and lowers his head. In that gesture one could even feel elegance. The three hyumans were fascinated by the lizardman's attitude.

[Actually…]

With a meek face, Raidou looks back at the three students.

[It was my bad for introducing Zwei as Blue Lizard-kun Zwei. Zwei-kun, no, Zwei-san is a woman] <P-P-Plottwist!>

"Wa?"

[That's why calling her rascal must have hit a nerve. Please call her Zwei-san or Miss Zwei. No well, my

delicacy was insufficient]

“…”

An unexplainable silence falls.

[Well, I want you to fight her with that in mind]

“Raidou-sensei” (Sif)

It is unusual for her to interrupt Raidou’s words.

[What is it Sif?]

“We still have time, so please let us have a rematch with Miss Zwei” (Sif)

[No but, if you begin now, it will get pretty late…]

“Please!!”

For some reason, Raidou receives an appeal overflowing with intensity. He reflexively looks at the lizardman＜woman?＞. She nods back. Now that he mentioned it, when he looked at her, he could see a gentle female-looking smile.

(Today we had plans of going to Gotetsu with the students, but at this rate the three of them will be late. In that case, they would have to enter a place with a sugary smell and that would be hard on them. But this time was because I mistakenly introduced this lady as a male, and that brought the confusion so… no helping it. I will keep them company) (Makoto)

It was already a time where it would be late to call evening. At the time when the darkness of the night was

taking the leading role…

Raidou makes contact with his follower Shiki and gives him instructions of going first with the four students to Gotetsu.

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“Sensei, thanks for the meal! We may intrude in the library again, so please take care of us in the upcoming lectures!”

“Thanks for the meal!”

[Take care when returning]

“Everyone, don’t go sidetracking and just head straight back” (Shiki)

When Gotetsu was already arranging things to close, there were students there lowering their heads. In this town where the students have a higher standing, this is a strange scene. It’s Raidou and his students.

The seven seem to be returning to their dorms, all of them disappear into the night street. From Gotetsu to the dorms there’s no difference in direction and all go the same way. As long as they enter the Academy’s terrain, there’s no need to worry. At the very least, Raidou makes it so he can detect any unusual events and takes a breath. The reason he presses excessive care towards them might be because he sees the shadows of his past club juniors in them.

“Now then, let’s return as well Shiki” (Makoto)

“Yes. Lime and the others are attending a dinner party with the staff members of the merchant guild and employees of nearby stores, so it seems that the time they return is still unknown. How about we return to Asora?” (Shiki)

Hearing Shiki’s proposal, Raidou doesn’t respond immediately and ponders. Thanks to one article Eva brought to him, he has been able to move forward in his training with a clear goal in mind. He was able to feel more fun and fulfilment. The usual him would have immediately decided to go to Asora and move his body. Shiki also based his decision off that fact, and seeing his master pondering was out of expectations.

“Let’s see. No, today let’s return to the company. Shiki, you… did you put something in the head of Jin and the others before I grouped up with you?” (Makoto)

“?!! What do you mean by… something?” (Shiki)

Shiki makes an easy to understand reaction towards the question of his master. There’s no need to hear his answer. Raidou points out one of the possibilities he predicted to Shiki.

“From what I saw, they were pretty motivated you see. Specially Jin. He said he might be intruding in the library, but he looked more like he was ready to go somewhere. Jin normally says things that one would normally not say, and he was especially merry in that one. And so, what did you tell them?” (Makoto)

“… They were so dispirited after facing the Mist Lizard’s second phase, so I unintentionally meddled. They seem to

have enough capital to use teleport formations, so I recommended them to raise their level. The Rotsgard students are actually encouraged to increase their own level anyways. Since the time they entered Raidou-sama's class, they have barely increased their level after all" (Shiki)

"Well, I haven't put maze exploration and field work in the lecture menu. And to obtain the experience points to increase their level they have to kill something. I see, because they were so desperate about my class, they got delayed in their level increase huh" (Makoto)

Raidou does a bitter smile. Increasing their skills without relying on their level, now that he thinks about it, this method differs from the academy's normal route. The Rotsgard students are all registered in the Adventurer Guild. Of course, they are not forced to do it. It's because it is convenient, so they make sure to finish the registration beforehand. Because of various reasons, there's no guild sub-branch reception desk in the town where the main academy is in, but all the students have a guild card. You can obtain it for free and it has an interface with high communication functionality, and it seems to be used a lot in the academy. Makoto learned of this recently. Leaving aside the information of teachers, he hasn't placed much attention in the information regarding students.

"There's also the experiment results of the effects of Asora's fruits, so their abilities have increased considerably, but increasing their levels can prove as a good addition" (Shiki)

"Addition huh. Shiki, what you really want to teach them

is not power, but self-confidence right? If they went out and fought some random mamono in the outskirts at their current state, they will probably get quite surprised" (Makoto)

"… So you saw right through me huh. As expected" (Shiki)

"No well, it's just that I can understand stuff like this. This is a path I have taken with my sensei after all" (Makoto)

"This is a prediction from me, it may be a bit overoptimistic, but if they try hard for three days, everyone will without doubt be able to pass over level 70" (Shiki)

"Well, isn't that an acceptable pace? Around this place there's a limit in the places one can fight and the enemies, and even when Jin acts like that, he is the type that doesn't do rash things. If they level up to that extent, they might get overconfident and tell me to call out the Mist Lizard again next week. It will be the last time the sisters will be participating as well. At any rate, Shiki, isn't your way of expressing beginning to sound like Tomoe?" (Makoto)

"She told me to learn of Raidou-sama's world and gave me several documents. I have been looking through them with interest" (Shiki)

Raidou was predicting the actions of his students and having an expression as if having fun. He was being immersed in a pleasant sensation, like watching juniors trying their best. Predicting by reading the trends of

society is still too hard for him, but with his memories of his club activities, and his memories of his own training, he was able to somehow grasp the behavior and thought patterns of the students.

“I presented them a place where the current them can manage. From tomorrow on we will be able to move more easily huh. We will be liberated from protecting the students” (Shiki)

Shiki talks with a cheerful tone mixed with a feeling of freedom as he tells him about the advice he gave to the students.

“…There might be unexpected events, so just in case, let’s see… let’s have Eris follow them at their back. If we give them a banana, those girls would definitely give an immediate approval” (Makoto)

“As you wish” (Shiki)

Instead of being happy about being free, he first thinks about securing the safety of his students. ‘Isn’t master pretty soft as well?’ are the words Shiki swallowed and just replied with a positive response.

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Too easy.

It is so easy that it isn’t even an obstacle.

The omnipotent sensation I felt in the village I was raised in was ruling my whole body. I was called a prodigy. In sword, bow, magic and bare-hand as well. I didn’t lose to anyone in the village. Since the time I obtained a guild

card and was able to increase my level, I went almost every day to hunt, and in time, not even the people in the neighboring villages were able to beat me.

An unbearable feeling of being able to do anything. Before I was called by the academy to come as a scholarship student and arrived at Rotsgard, I was always number one.

Since the time I entered Rotsgard, my useless confidence was crushed in an instant though. In the world, there's always a top for the top. I still have the potential. I was just a student with a bit of an advantage.

What I am trying to say is that, for a long time, I haven't tasted this sensation.

Right now, our party of seven are in a forest that is slightly apart from Rotsgard. The objective is level up. It is normally something that is impossible to forget, but since the time we entered Raidou-sensei's class, we practically haven't increased our levels. Probably not only me, Amelia Hopelace, but also Jin who stands at the front of battle and decides on his objectives, and the Rembrandt sisters who have just joined the class, must be the same. In Raidou-sensei's class there's no practices for increasing levels, moreover, seeing that my level has not increased from the latter halves of 40, I might have been feeling bitter.

But I think that the number one reason lies in Raidou-sensei. That sensei's class is a strange class where one gets strong even without increasing levels. No one has divulged it though. It is true that it is harsh to an incredible extent, but I can clearly tell that I have

become stronger than a few months ago.

I was told to think about the meaning behind every attack and defense. He also told me to learn the habit of inquiry. In the middle of the lecture as well, in the time when we were at the enjoyment lecture against Blue Lizard-kun, he gave us words and teachings I didn't understand, but now, after hunting, I have clearly understood.

The opponent's movements are dull. In the time when we thought that, made contact and decided on our strategy, the mamonos practically didn't move. It was a scarily easy fight. Even though our speed didn't really rise.
This is a first.

Even when an individual does a sudden change in movements, we are already prepared for that case so we are able to counter it without any problems. If this were a fight against other hyumans or demi-humans, the story might have been different, but this didn't look like the same enemies that everyone had to desperately surround and defeat in the past, before receiving Raidou-sensei's lessons.

This out of place sensation is probably being felt by everyone right now. While everyone is bewildered, we slaughtered the mamonos in an unbelievable pace and with practically no injuries, we increased our levels.

"This is amazing…"

Right now we are resting at a base in order to pass the night.
The wind user Izumo who normally doesn't show

emotions in his face often, was unable to hold back his excitement and let's those words out. Ah, calling him a wind user now might not be correct. He is now able to use three types of elements in a level where it can be used in real combat after all.

Everyone, including me, nodded at Izumo's words. In just a single day, their level that should have entered a stage where it is hard to level, had increased by 8. Moreover, there's no sense of inconsistency in their body that should be felt when one levels up and gains power. They were able to properly use the increased power as their own. It was mysterious.

"This is the result of Raidou-sensei and Shiki's class?" (Misura)

Misura intercepts attacks and receives them. A role where he is bombarded a lot. That's why, after fighting for a whole day and increasing levels, it should be normal for him to not have enough stamina to even talk. Today he didn't receive any wound that could be called a wound. It isn't like the number of wounds he received were small, but the medicine that Shiki-san gave him healed the wounds in an instant. That must have been one of the main reasons.
With Misura and Sif's spells, healing would have been plenty possible, but because they didn't need to use magic power in that area, they were able to concentrate in their attacking role and it made it a lot easier to defeat mamonos.

It felt like a completely different world.

That's right, Shiki-san. He is a really amazing person. He

is guiding us to the next step. Without him, we definitely wouldn't have been able to recover from Raidou-sensei's class. I think I myself am a sore loser, but that sensei sometimes says things that hit really hard. I heard that he is practically the same age as us, but just how real that is is questionable. Shiki-san puts the demonic lectures of Raidou-sensei in my permissible line.

Honestly speaking, I like Shiki-san. He is the ideal male. He is kind and comprehensive. On top of that, he has a refreshing smile that matches perfectly with his beauty. Has extensive knowledge and isn't unpleasant. About Raidou-sensei, his attractive trait is dreadful. I wish such a person with minus traits to not barge in. Actually, for the Rembrandt sisters to be chasing after him is even more… Well, enough of that.

Hah… is he already married? He definitely has at least a lover. If it's him, I don't care if I am number 2 or 3 though~. Right now my admiration is so strong that I can't even imagine myself beside him though.

"Thinking while fighting makes so much difference huh"

"It was as if I got incredibly fast!"

"It was terrible when we rushed into Blue Lizard-kun without thinking after all"

"So true!"

The first night wore on. I was somehow able to calm down my exalted body and it was difficult to rest.

The battles at the next day passed with no problems at all. We changed the battle location to the inner parts of

the forest where we weren't able to enter in the past. We were still in perfect harmony against the first mamonos we clashed with. That we have two excellent magicians who can counter almost all elements must have been one of the main reasons of it. Right now I can only use magic that can barely be called firepower, but once I return to the academy, I plan on doing my best in that aspect. 'It widens your strategy options', this is also one of the remarks of Raidou-sensei. To think it would increase our advantage in battle so much. I can imagine Izumo and Sif are thinking the same way as I am. A part of me hesitated in being friends with Sif because of the Rembrandt's bad reputation, but in a situation where we entrust our life to each other, we are able to cooperate this well. We have eaten meals together several times and have conversations like the one last night, so I think I don't have such a thick wall created between us now. Of course, Yuno as well. I don't know how the Rembrandt sisters acted before, but now they are reliable party members.

"N?"

Just now, I think I saw a small brown person at that tree's branch… Was I imagining things?

"Amelia, what's wrong?" (Jin)

Jin asks me even when it was only a slight reaction. He is also a reckless one. He is the type that beats his enemies down before he gets taken out, but now he is slowly changing that way of fighting. He is the first one to charge into the frontline while confirming the situation in the whole area. There isn't even a need to say it; that's not an easy feat. 'You are overthinking', is what I tell him

with my eyes. As expected of a scholarship student, he has excelling talent. It's vexing to admit it but, I am still unable to look at the whole picture yet. This is one subject I have to better in the future.

"Hmph, I felt like that branch shook a bit, but it seems there's no problem" (Amelia)

"Got it. At this rate we will be able to arrive at the lake shore later today. Tonight let's camp there" (Jin)

We agree at Jin's words. In the inner parts of this forest there is a small lake. It has high quality water and is in high demand, but because the place itself is a problem, the supply can't catch up to the demand. In short, it's highly priced. The place is obviously somewhere where a lot of mamonos in this forest gather. Meaning that the main problem is the troublesome transportation. The containers and weight are quite the hindrance. There also seem to be rare medicinal plants growing, and if they are going to make money, that part is easier to do and it has popularity.

Ah, that's right.

"Hey, Jin. We came all the way here, so how about getting medicinal plants from the lake shore as a present for Sensei and Shiki-san?" (Amelia)

What a nice idea from me. Since we will be going there, we should at least repay our benefactors.

"Nice! The water is a pain to bring, so let's bring medicinal plants back at least" (Daena)

Daena also agrees. He also decreased the amount of

movements he does a lot, so thanks to that, he has conquered his weakness of his stamina not lasting till evening. He jumps around a lot when fighting, and yet, he is truly energetic right now. That hell-like enjoyment lecture has steadily increased our competency. It wasn't simple torture. I'm glad I believed in Shiki-san!

"Then let's continue moving on! I also increased my level a lot and am overflowing with power!!" (Yuno)

With spear in hand, Yuno walks parallel to Jin. A bit behind, Daena and Misura. Izumo, Sif and I are securing the path while following their steps. Since the time we began taking Raidou-sensei's class our stamina has gone up, but having magicians running around the forest is just harsh. As time goes it may be possible, but right now we move forward by walking in an easy to walk part and are somehow able to follow the party. And yet, our progress is advancing rapidly. Thinking about that, I can tell that we are all doing our best.

While smiling wryly at the merriness of the frontline, we arrived at the lake shore where they were waiting.

There, a single dragon was present.

No joke. Seriously.

Is it using this lake as a water supply?

No good. I am steadily getting agitated. My composure till now is being overwritten.

That's not it. This is not how it's supposed to be. Think. Think of a counter-measure. Attack, defend or run. What's most important is to confirm my cards at hand.

Calm down, calm down!!!

At the front of my field of vision, there's still a decent amount of distance. A crescent moon-shaped lake, we stand at that outside part. The dragon is close to the center, in the part where the land pushes into the inner area. It is drinking water, no, it was. Right now it has stopped its movements and is looking at our direction.

It has a body resembling that of a lizard, but the proof that it wasn't a lizard is in its forehead that has a sharp horn protruding straight forward. The color of its body is gray, its outer skin layered with scales. Its length is probably around 4 to 5 meters.

"J-Jin…"

Misura's voice is scraped. We also understand his current feelings. However, you also were at perfect condition when coming here, so you should be thinking as well. I believe in you guys.

"Amelia, do you know about that one over there?" (Jin)

Jin slowly unsheathes his sword and takes a combat stance. He must have judged it impossible to overcome this situation without fighting. I quietly nod at his question. Right now, what I can be the most proud of in this party is my knowledge.

"Yeah. It is one of the lowest grade dragons. I don't know the name, but if I remember correctly, it is a dragon that moves individually and its weakness is ice. It is recommended to fight it with long range attacks as soon as you encounter one and defeat it. If you are going to

challenge it, a party of 10 with levels over 90 is best" (Amelia)

"What are our current levels? I am 75" (Jin)

"Same here" (Amelia)

"I am 74" <Male>

"74 here" <Male>

"I am 77" (Sif)

"I am also 77" (Yuno)

"… I am 73" <Male>

The numbers and levels are not enough. In short, running away is the best choice. Just… right now we are already being targeted by the dragon as enemies. If it were a situation where we were the ones finding it, then running away would sound like a realistic option. Also, that its weakness is ice is bad. If possible, it would have been best if it was wind. Or fire and earth. In a situation where we can smash it with strong magic, we would still have a chance of winning.

"I will be the rear guard. Izumo, I want you to cast wind support magic and have everyone's speed increased" (Jin)

Jin's words hinted at escaping. It may be the correct choice. But that means Jin would be-

"GYYEAAAAAAAA!!"

My thoughts were cut off in the middle.

The moment the sluggish dragon opened its mouth facing our way, an absurdly high volume roar echoed in the area!

An overpowering roar! If it's a dragon, this yell is used by almost all of them to seal the movements of their opponents. That's right, it had that. I forgot such essential information in this important moment! I pretended to be calm but was unable to act it!

Regret wells up over and over inside me, but my body is not moving at all. I can tell that it was totally cowering in fear. This is my first time receiving this roar, but it is really effective!

With its pair of legs, the dragon advances to our location at a speed that doesn't match its massive body. The fear that roar poured in my body has not disappeared. Actually, because of the trembling that its advance is making, my body trembles as if responding back to it.

Even if I said it is the lowest grade, it is obviously not an opponent we can match!!

Someone, anyone, if you are able to move, please run!

My vision that has been freed looks at the other members, but every single one of them is clenching their teeth and with a rigid face, their whole body trembled. Jin, at this moments you would do a war cry and show us that you can move right?! Is it fine to just wait and get eaten?!

My thoughts that were close to pushing blame were vain, and the dragon continues to approach. Just an instant of

carelessness. A single mistake. For such an ending to happen is just…!!

“… Obu… Zeiruno… Juna”

A-ria?

Where? Up?! At a tree branch?!

There, a small girl wearing a white parka I have never seen before was sitting.

She had a yellow fruit-looking thing in one hand, maybe she was in the middle of her snack?

There’s a dragon right here though. A snack., seriously?

My head was being ruled by confusion. Even when I try to remember Raidou-sensei’s teachings, I couldn’t keep my calm. It is mortifying but, the me right now can’t stay calm in any situation.

What a strange parka. There’s a decoration at the head part. Eh? Cat ears?

At the moment I thought such a useless and stupid thing…

Countless vines came out from the forest and were heading to the lake, no, were released at the dragon. Maybe it was taken by surprise, the dragon slowed its speed, but without giving it any time to decide anything, the vines wrapped around its whole body and stopped its movements.

Summoning of vines? No, these are trees? From the

branches of the trees, it changes to something and stretches towards the dragon and seals its movements?

From the huge trees and the saplings as well, not only that, the grass and shrub too. They all stretched out like shackles. Now that I look in more detail, it is not only brown, I can also see green mixed as well. This is a spell I have never seen before.

“…”

My voice doesn’t come out. Is this also because of the dragon’s roar? To seal your ability to use arias as well, what a truly scary skill. Thinking that every dragon is able to use this, I can feel my back freezing.

*Ton

A light sound is heard.

When I look, I can see the person who saved us (?) standing in between the place where Izumo and Sif are. To be able to come down so easily from such a high altitude. Is she a demi-human?

Because of the parka that is worn deeply, I can only tell that she has brown skin. Also that she is small.

That girl placed her hand on Izumo’s stomach and hit it lightly with a *ponpon sound. She shakes her head left and right.

“How vexing”

“?!”

After that, she grabbed Sif's breasts with both hands and rubbed them. Oh~.

"The era of large breasts is not eternal"

"!#$!&?!" (Sif)

From her expression, I can tell that Sif is panicking. Honestly speaking, the true feelings from me who has a modest hill are: "Good job". Tte, what am I thinking?

If we think about the order, I am next?

My conjecture must have been correct, the kid (I think) that is jogging cutely to where I am, stepped onto my tiptoes with all she had.

"I am not small!"

"&&!!"

O-Ouch!! Or more like, why does she know what I was thinking?!

After that, she talked with each one in order while walking to where the dragon is.

By the way, she compared Yuno with Sif and then told her 'brace yourself'.

To Daena, she told him 'Live strong, pikmin'.

To Misura, 'There's a spider ahead. You can still make it, sucker'. <Don't mind this one, I didn't understand it either>

To Jin, 'Last time I mistook the change', saying that, she

took out coins and put them in his shirt pocket.

I-I can't understand at all.

"Well, it is still an excursion till you return so…"

That girl turns back and looks at every one of us, and with the hand that's not holding the fruit-looking thing, she pointed her index finger at us.

"Also, bananas are not counted as a snack. I still have two. Ufufufu~"

… Why is it, I don't understand what she is saying, but I am beginning to feel like there's not even a trace of tension here.

The dragon, while being bounded in both hands and feet, struggles with its two legs. I don't know how many trees he is being wrapped in, but to be able to restrain a dragon for so long, what a high leveled spell. This girl is definitely a magician.

She must have thought about something. The person wearing a parka with cat ears finishes eating the yellow fruit and throws the skin-like thing at the dragon's feet.

Of course, the skin was cruelly stepped on and crushed.

The kid looks at that mortified.

Eh? What? What was she even trying to do? <Lol, was she trying to make it trip?>

Right now, it isn't as hard to voice out. Just once is fine, I felt like retorting.

“We said so!”

The parka person declares firmly while pointing at the lower half of the dragon. It seems she stopped her mortification for now. The other hand was placed at her waist and was making a pose. Maybe it’s because of her ability, she has a lot of composure when facing a dragon. Aah, I want to be stronger~.

“It would be dangerous if we make princess Komoe angry”

Princess Komoe? This person, is she under the command of a country?

“Because this happened after all (monotone)”

Before I noticed, there was a magic formation below the parka girl’s feet. At her fingertip, there’s a spinning small thin staff. Is that the tool she uses as intermediary? It is as small as a writing tool and it doesn’t look powerful at all…

The magic formations were being posted at several parts of the lake surface. Countless magic formations of the same pattern floated on the lake surface and…

The dragon faced the lake and was thrown there. It was freed from the tree shackles and its body was in midair, moreover, on top of the lake surface that has countless dim shining magic formations.

It probably wanted to roar once again. The dragon opened its mouth wide.

Will it plunge into the water first, or will the second roar

come first? I was thinking that, but neither of them occurred.

Because from the countless formations, giant spears of ice spouted out simultaneously and skewered the dragon in midair.

I felt that unreal scene was slightly comical.

“Too bad. If you were able to dodge every sone of those, the true performance would have begun”

The words that were nonchalantly continuing held a meaning I didn’t know of.

The dragon’s body turned into dust.

The cat eared white parka kid also disappeared at some point in time.

This summer will be one that we will never be able to forget. With our bodies that were still unable to move, we silently accepted that truth.

Chapter 110: Summer Vacation's Part 2 ~ Last Migration Interview ~

Asora. The mist town.

The location is not definite. A place that no one knows its details. Even the master, Misumi Makoto, is unable to comprehend it completely.

Currently there's several races from the wasteland that have moved there and taken residence. They are in the middle of constructing a town apart from their original settlement.

But for the size of Asora, the amount of residents is just way too low. Because even when we count everyone, the numbers won't reach the thousands. There are several reasons. They must fit Makoto's conditions, must be accepted by his followers, and the invited race not accepting migration.

Makoto judged that it wouldn't prove any problems to increase the residents and send out people to invite the races with the wasteland as its focus, but… there were no reports reaching him that there are races wishing to migrate. There were several who were suitable, but till now, there's not a single one who has migrated.
Recently, Makoto has been busy in his activities at Academy Town, so the highland orc Ema was being considerate of his situation and stopping the reports to a certain extent until she gets a clear answer from the other party in order to prevent any problems. The efficient

secretary Ema arranges all sorts of reports before outlining them to Makoto and his followers. She understands that there isn't sufficient people, so reporting every single case of migration request would just trouble Makoto. That is most likely one of the reasons why it hasn't come to a conclusion till now. After giving them an apologize, she asks them to do another interview when Makoto gets some time in his hands, is what she thought.

When Makoto got that time in his hands, meaning today when the Academy Town's activities enter summer vacation (a word Ema is not familiar with), his activities in Asora increased. Moreover, he is doing some sort of training and there are times when he stays there all day. This was the best chance. Ema told Makoto about the races that were requesting migration, and told him the time of the interview. These are all cases that have already gotten through the approval of his followers Tomoe, Mio and Shiki. Next, there's only the need of Makoto nodding and their migration would be accepted. In total, three cases.

Even though she has been holding back the reports for a long time, three cases are not that much. But it isn't like migrating to Asora isn't enticing. Actually, there were a lot of cases that just by telling them, they held an incredible amount of interest, but most of them pulled back in the middle of it.

Asora is bringing in adventurers with an objective in mind. This is something Makoto proposed and Tomoe accepted, but because of this deed, the races that have been living for a while in the entrance of the wasteland

retracted their migration candidacy.
Maybe because they have battles with hyumans a lot; the demonic beasts, demi-humans and beast people that live there have extraordinary amounts of hostility towards hyumans. Therefore, just by thinking that adventurers are in Asora – no matter if it's at an isolated place – they didn't wish to migrate. They are random races that have strong hostility, so Ema didn't think much about it. Because it's better to not plant seeds that might bring problems after all. In the initial stages, invitations were brought to them, but they were all refused.

In the exploration of the inner parts of the wasteland, there's a need for good amounts of people, so the hostility towards hyumans is normally thinner. The number of hyumans that have gotten that strong are few, and on top of that, the races that live there normally follow the logic of 'the strong eat the weak'.
And so, the talk about invitation in itself begins mostly from races of these areas. The Forest Onis can be called an incredibly rare case. Well, the current situation is that they are being forced into a Spartan training that would make even Mist Lizards pale, and it isn't a complete migration either.

From this stage, Makoto's follower, Tomoe, begins the side by side selection. What's usually investigated are things like the race's diet, social nature presence, special abilities, etc. Depending on the followers, the way they carry out the selection is different. Mio is the most whimsical and instinctive; Tomoe is careful and selects well; Shiki emphasizes ability and selects in a safe manner. In short, have Mio agree to a certain extent, get pass over a picky stage, and have ability up to a

minimum; is how they pass the selection. It's incredibly harsh.
After that, we bring the talk about migration to that race.

Even if the three are suitable, there's the chance of them refusing, so… it was hard to move to the last interview. This is one of the reasons that's causing Asora to be shorthanded. It isn't like anyone's fine, and the people that investigate know that. It must be a race that can be respected, or it would bring difficulties in the future. There's no guarantee that there won't problems occurring after the migration.

This time, the three cases that Ema has, based on her own experience, they are people that they can expect from. There's also the probability of some problems, but there's the chance that the three of them migrate. She herself wasn't involved in the investigations so she only knows the various races from documents, but from the information, that's how she evaluated them.

If the migration is established, it will turn busy again, but for Ema it is a happy type of busy. Because the comrades will increase. From every race, children are born and there's some slight changes in Asora, but as expected, it can't compare to the change that the migration of a new race would bring.

"Excuse my intrusion"

"Ah, Ema. Morning. Today is the interview right? Is it beginning?"

"Good morning. The three races' representatives have already been invited to come here. If it fits Makoto-

sama's convenience, I am planning on beginning after this" (Ema)

Makoto talks in broken down words and Ema responds with a smile. He talked in a polite manner before, so there was a time when she requested him to conduct himself as a lord. Now he does it, but it is more like he is speaking with a friend, and that's how he acts towards Ema. It isn't the goal, but it is something that makes her happy.

"Eh? We are not the ones receiving them huh. Calling them to us, how eminent～" (Makoto)

"Makoto-sama. We were the ones who brought the talk about migration to them, but they also wished for it and that's why it has advanced to this stage. So it is natural for them to be the ones coming to us" (Ema)

For Ema, Makoto is the messiah that saved her family, the highland orcs. On top of that, he invited them to a prosperous and magnificent world. She considers him as an existence close to God. Even if that's his speech and conduct, there are times when his low stance attitude is not amusing for Ema. Even if he explained her that that's how we was brought up and it can't be helped, she understood it, but couldn't accept it. She even thinks that it should be fine for him to be a bit haughtier. For Makoto, it might have been quite the difficult request.

"Ema, you were a bit scary just now. I see, they are already here huh. Did Tomoe bring them?" (Makoto)

"No. They came here by Komoe-sama's gate creation training" (Ema)

“So Komoe-chan can even do that already. Even though Shiki was finally able to do it not too long ago. I feel like he might get depressed again” (Makoto)

“She is like Tomoe-sama’s child after all. Well then, let’s move to another room” (Ema)

“Understood. There were three cases right? Can you please show me the documents?” (Makoto)

“Yes, here. Please look through them while we are moving” (Ema)

Ema gives Makoto the documents that were at her side. Opening the door, she prompts Makoto and begins to walk in front of him to lead him to the room. Ema walks at the left side of Makoto in a fixed interval. It was silent. In the hall, the only noise was the sounds of papers being turned while Makoto is walking. In the place where Makoto’s room is, even if Asora is peaceful, there’s a reasonable amount of security posted in that area. In a day like today where they know beforehand that Makoto will be mobilizing, they hide and don’t show themselves in consideration. Makoto doesn’t really mind it that much, so the most he thinks is ‘there’s few people here～’.

“Heh～. This time there are races with a good amount of numbers. If all of them migrate, we would surpass the thousands, no, as expected, it won’t be that much. For there to be this many when they have been living in the inner parts, that’s pretty impressive” (Makoto)

“Even if we call it inner, it is a part that is prosperous. The third race that will be interviewed is one of those cases. That place is one that will have fights for rich

lands no matter what, so it can be said that they have been decreasing in numbers steadily. They are also the ones that are the most active at wishing for migration" (Ema)

"I see. Like an oasis in a desert huh. Then those guys have been protecting their village with their skills" (Makoto)

"That's how it is. The first ones that you will be meeting are a race that live in a special place because of their ability, and the other race, because of their racial characteristic, foreign enemies don't try to fight with them. Both of them have high combat power, and in terms of social nature, there's no problems for now" (Ema)

"… Certainly. And they also acknowledge living in level ground. Fufu, I am beginning to look forward to meeting them" (Makoto)

"This is the room, Makoto-sama. I originally wanted this to be in the audience room, but since this was a request, we prepared a table. Please do take care of what you say" (Ema)

The two of them arrive in front of a room where two Mist Lizards stand in row between both sides of the door. Ema felt that the body of the Mist lizards that was firm had become even firmer with the arrival of Makoto. In this Asora, there aren't many jobs that let you involve directly with Makoto. These two that were selected as the door guards this time must be pretty nervous. A smile surfaced in her face as she imagined their situation. By the way, for some reason, in Makoto's mansion (or more like,

lately it is beginning to look more like a castle in Makoto's perspective) there's a wide space that is prepared for audiences, and when he heard the report from Ema that they will be using that place, Makoto hurriedly asked her to change it to a normal room with a table. 'I shouldn't have told him', is what Ema muttered and Makoto didn't miss it.

Inside the room there's a table and seats. As usual, it is made from excellent craftsmanship. The work of the eldwas. The windows are open, letting in the outside air, and there isn't that characteristic smell an unused room has. Makoto, seeing that there were two seats prepared, estimated that there will be two people for each race representative he will be meeting today.

"Please sit down and wait here. I will be bringing the guests here" (Ema)

Ema urges Makoto to take a seat and after confirming that he has sat down, she leaves the room. She tells the two lizards that she will going to get the related party and advances to the neighboring room.

On the other hand, Makoto is sitting and waiting for her to bring the representatives while reading the documents of the first race he will be meeting. Of course, he is using [Sakai] to grasp his surroundings. He knows what room Ema headed to, and understood that there were two guests in there. When they move to where he is, he plans on hiding the documents and receive them standing. Ema wanted to avoid exactly that and that's why she asked him to stay sit in the room waiting, but he didn't understand that at all.

(The first ones I will be meeting are… a race called winged people huh. Well, they obviously fly. In that case, were they living in high ground? Do they have bird wings, or maybe bug type wings? Ah, it is written. At their back they have bird wings or bat wings huh. Both of them are the same race. Even if they don't mix, they can be born with either. This people are a social position society. N~ it is probably gonna be alright. If they talk about social position here, it would be troublesome. Here we basically don't have higher or lower in races after all) (Makoto)

Looking at a part of the documents, Makoto felt uneasy. But it could be said that this was a reading discrepancy. The winged people are born with bird wings or bat wings. The distinction is simply because of the difference in power. And based on that, they divide their work to fit their strength, and as a race in the wasteland, they are quite numerous. They have a community of about three hundred. Of course, the strong ones get important jobs and big authority, but it comes with its dangers. It was a bit different from the social position society that Makoto is imagining. What he was imagining is a bad image where the society is divided in commoners and slaves.

(Anyways, if I don't meet them and see for myself, nothing will begin. If they are way too awful, I will excuse myself) (Makoto)

Makoto senses that the three of them are heading where he is and stops his imagination. He stands up and waits for the door to open.

Before long, the door opened. In Makoto's eyes appear two people with the height of a normal person and folded

wings at their back, and Ema who looks at Makoto's appearance and does a small sigh. The two of the winged people have a darkish skin, and it reminded Makoto of the Forest Onis.

"Nice to meet you and welcome to Asora. My name is Makoto. I am in a position similar to that of a feudal lord in this place" (Makoto)

In front of the three that approach the table, Makoto introduces himself first. Ema sighs once again. In her perspective, she probably wished Makoto to at least say something like 'Great to see you have arrived to our world'. The winged people seem to be confused at Makoto's behavior too. They have already received the interview with Shiki beforehand. Because they sensed that thick overpowering aura of him, they couldn't understand the behavior of the male in front of them that should be standing above that personage.

"… Eh? Ah, go ahead, sit down first" (Makoto)

Before he sits, he urges the stiffened party to sit.

(Both of them have white bat wings huh. The highest standing people have come) (Makoto)

Makoto observes the winged people with a slightly mistaken understanding. Aside from the difference in bird wings and bat wings, there's also the difference in the color of the wings. White and black. In other words, there are 4 types of wings. The one at the highest is the white bat wings, the next are the white bird wings, then the black bat wings and bird wings.

“… Nice to meet you. For this offer of migrating to such a splendid land, we thank you very much. I am the winged people’s elder, name is Kakun. This one here is my counselor, Shona” (Kakun)

“Nice to meet you Makoto-sama. Pleasure to make your acquaintance” (Shona)

After their words, the winged people take sit facing Makoto. Male and female. The one who claimed to be the elder is a male, and the one who greeted without her naming herself is the female.

With a slightly rough expression, Ema sits beside Makoto last.

“I have received the report that you wish to migrate to Asora. Taking that as a preamble, I have a number of questions I want to do. Is that okay?” (Makoto)

“Of course”

“Great. I will be hearing the questions from your side later. Well then, first of all…”

Makoto begins the interview with the winged people. Without noticing at all that Ema had resolved herself to warn him about his behavior later.

◇◆◇◆◇◆◇◆

“It seems that he understood us well, but is that person really the lord of this land? He was acting pretty lenient though…”

“Yeah, but don’t you feel like the conversation went way

too smoothly? I heard from Ema that at a later time they will be checking our combat ability, so until then, we must make sure to not get careless. I suggest that we inspect this place”

“I already understand that Shona. But when I think that they approached our race with our power as their goal, it feels like what is being evaluated is our attitude as a race and I can’t help but be confused. After Makoto-sama said that we were approved and Ema-dono added that there will be an ability test, Makoto-sama told her that that wasn’t necessary. Even though we are given the permission to live in such a rich land, the conditions just don’t balance. If in the end there’s actually no hidden objective behind all this, I would have spun the gears in my brain for nothing” (Kakun)

“They are actually abnormal after all. To be able to live in this kind of place without fighting each other. From what I have seen, Makoto-sama didn’t have any evil intent when he stretched this offer, but I think that to doubt that is an important job of yours. Now then, let’s go out and have them show us around” (Shona)

Leaving the room, the orc that Ema told them will be working as their guide was waiting for the winged people’s elder and counsellor who were giving out their impressions of the interview with Makoto.

The result of the interview is pass. And it was so easy that it was anticlimactic.

‘How many conditions will they bring out and what will they want from us?’ even when they tried to throw the questions they had, all the answers betrayed their

expectations in a good way. What they were the most surprised about was that they accepted independency really readily. The winged people were expecting a lot of conditions for this favorable migration. For example, something like payment to the previous residents, offer 80% of their people for manual labor (excluding all the old and children, almost everyone), moreover, distribution of manual labor that everyone would want to avoid. They came with the intention of being treated one step before slavery. All of their life necessities are satisfied, and on top of that, they are able to obtain several articles that they have never been able to get their hands on by equivalent trade. Moreover, the ones who wish to, are given the chance to study, and have also promised high level training for their warriors.
When Ema told them the outline of the offer, they doubted that even 1% of it would actually be true, but Makoto completely affirmed them all. It can't be helped that Kakun and Shona unconsciously widened their eyes and opened their mouths agape.

Will a future like that really come for them? The two of them still half-doubted as they moved through Asora and continued their surprises.

Winged people, over three hundred denizens. Pass. Migration after 5 days.

◇◆◇◆◇◆◇◆

"Well then, can you please take off that blindfold?"

The two women that were sitting in front of Makoto trembled greatly at his words.

Matching that, Ema also trembled a bit, but when Makoto exchanged glances with her, she was soon able to calm down again. She faces down as if she was embarrassed of being agitated.

“But, just as we explained, there’s a problem with our eyes”

“Even if we don’t have any intentions of injuring Makoto-sama, the effects will still take place”

The two women have a cloth with complex patterns drawn covering both of their eyes. The winged people that Makoto met before gave the impression of being slender, but these women have more meat in a good sense, a sensual figure. They have a cloth wrapped around their body resembling that of nymphs that appear in Greek mythology, and have an attire that exposes quite a lot. It’s not small clothes but cloth, is what Makoto muttered as he blushed.

Gorgon. For Makoto, calling them Medusa would be easier to understand, but it is a race that resembles her. The people that look at their eyes are turned into stone, is the special racial characteristic of them. They are a race that even with that ability they didn’t perish and have lived peacefully till now in the wasteland.

Their appearance is extremely close to that of hyumans but, maybe it reacts based on their emotions, their hair moves. The hair of those girls have quite the transformation capability and are legitimate weapons.

The girls have no control over their power, and it is always in an ON state. It is a power that doesn’t activate

on people of the same race, but if it's others, it will activate without mercy. It is an ability that can already be considered a curse. With a special blindfold they are somehow able to restrict the activation of their power to others.

This is the reason why they live in the wasteland and also the reason they secluded themselves. And they steadily move into the inner parts and change locations, so that they don't unnecessarily spread the petrification. There may be other circumstances, but at least that's how Makoto thought of it and felt that they are a kind race.

This time they got interested in the migration because of their hope that they may be able to use their power more naturally, and because of a problem the race carries.

They were defined as those girls, but actually, the Gorgons are a race that only has women. Meaning that they need a male from a different source. In exchange for being able to share their seed with most of the races, the babies they breed are all Gorgon. A mysterious race.
To be able to maintain their existence as a race, they must be in an environment with males. 'I am surprised they didn't perish' is the insensitive thought Makoto was thinking.

"It is fine with me. It didn't work for Tomoe right? In that case, it is fine. I will also be protecting Ema so, go ahead" (Makoto)

"But, from Makoto-sama we uhm… don't feel that much magic power though"

"I don't think you will end up safe at all"

Makoto is currently doing a certain training. Because of the effects of that training, he is using [Sakai] most of the time to suppress his magic power. Right now he is not using his power to look around the surroundings, in this time where he is receiving guests, but using it to suppress his magic power. The uneasiness that the two Gorgons are feeling is plausible.

“The two of you, if an ability didn’t work on Tomoe-sama, it is impossible for it to show any effects on Makoto-sama. I am also okay, so please take them off. That is Makoto-sama’s wish after all” (Ema)

Being urged by Ema, the two Gorgons place their hands on their blindfolds. Their hair undulates slightly, but Makoto didn’t seem to mind and looks at the two of them. Ema said that it was fine, but maybe she is nervous, her body is stiffened.

“Well then…”

“…”

The two of them take off their blindfolds. In front of them there is a man that called himself a hyuman and a female orc. The two of them didn’t turn into stone and just continued looking.

“Fumu, it certainly does seem to be eyes that hold a strong effect. Is it a type of demonic eye? But to have your eyes covered must be inconvenient right?” (Makoto)

Makoto talks to both of them like normal. Ema sighs in relief. Her reaction is actually the most normal one. No, the fact that they are okay is probably pretty strange.

And in reality, the Gorgons had their eyes wide open and were looking at the other party that's moving.

"Ah, ehm, yes. The food would also turn into stone so. Well, we can also eat petrified food. It won't taste good, however, we can absorb the nutrients. But even if we have to put on a blindfold to do it, it is more delicious to eat like that. Also, we talked about this at the previous interview; it is inconvenient when taking the seed of males of other races and… having our vision taken away affects our whole daily life"

"Yeah, it certainly does sound inconvenient. I have heard that some hyumans have that kind of hobby though…" (Ema)

The Gorgon that returned to her senses first, talks about the inconveniences. Ema agrees to that, and for some reason, looks at Makoto. Makoto felt like her eyes were a bit cold. It felt as if there was some sort of allusion to the latter half. <Shit, Makoto, your bdsm collection has been compromised!>

"Ema, don't look at me when you say that. Even if you don't retort to that, I clearly understand that it's inconvenient. But, Gorgon-san. I can't go as far as getting you a partner to make kids, so at that part it is more of a mutual concession, you don't mind right?" (Makoto)

"Yeah, in that case it is fine. With that blindfold, even in our current situation it should be fine, is what you told us right, Ema?"

"Yes. No problems" (Ema)

“In that case, there won’t be any problems to just change that blindfold into something similar like glasses or contacts that hold the same effect. And so, it can probably be solved. You have already accepted all the conditions including: sharing of knowledge, participation in battle training and cooperation in the construction of the land; so the only part of concern is probably the talk about baby making. If you act properly in that part, it should be fine. We will be confirming how much effect those eyes can take in Asora. But regarding the migration, I welcome you with open arms” (Makoto)

“Really?!”

The two Gorgons get up from their seat and look at Makoto as if shooting right through him. The two of them who were thinking all the time that they will definitely be rejected in the end, these answer was unbelievable.

“Then, all the Gorgons are fine with the migration right?” (Ema)

“Well that’s, we are really happy for that but…”

“Is it really, rea~lly all right? Because you know, we are a race that even if we are able to turn people into stone, we are unable to turn them back”

“Ah, I see. About the petrification, it can probably be cured so there’s no problem” (Makoto)

“Eh?!”

Makoto looks like he remembered something and places a hand on the table. It’s the table that was turned

instantly into stone after the Gorgons took off their blindfold. Makoto pours magic power.

“Uhm, like this… and then, by doing this…” (Makoto)

The table that was turned into a cold ashen color quickly returned into the colorful light brown one. But it soon turned into stone again. Obviously. It’s being exposed to the eyes of the Gorgons after all. It is in a state where it is continually transformed into stone, so the girls themself have already given up on thinking of a way to solve it.

“Ah! Damn it! So it won’t work if I don’t give it resistance to the petrification itself huh. Then how about this?!” (Makoto)

After meditating, Makoto once again puts his hand on the table and pours magic power.

The two Gorgons watch attentively. Even if it was only for an instant, they lost their words after seeing the table turned back from its petrified state. On the other hand, Ema didn’t show much agitation and is looking at Makoto. The girl that got surprised every time by Makoto is already gone.

This time, matching the words of Makoto, the table that returned to its wooden state didn’t turn back to stone.

Even after a while, it didn’t turn into stone again.

“Unbelievable”

“I thought we would have to wear this blindfold for the rest of our life…”

“In the past, I challenged a problematic abnormal status you see. As a byproduct of that, I have become able to deal with a good variety of abnormalities” (Makoto)

Makoto takes the eyes of admiration from the two of them with a bashful laugh. Shiki, Makoto and the others have challenged a status abnormality. The Tree Punishment was a status abnormality that surpassed the power of the Gorgon’s petrification by leaps and bounds. Because of that, Makoto was able to calmly counter the petrification power of theirs. The Tree Punishment interferes with their existence itself and brings about scary changes. Even with the most intelligent people of Asora, it still took several months before they could find a solution to the curse.

“Makoto-sama. Please shelter us in this world”

“We will follow any orders”

“Shelter you say. After talking to you, I didn’t see any problems in your social nature. Try not to fall into immoral relationships, triangle relationships or muddy relationships, and it will be fine. It seems that you are not familiar to welcoming the father, so in the worst case scenario, if the lost hyumans meet the purpose, feel free to do so. Uhm, it may be a bad way of calling it but… something like a one-night stand” (Makoto)

After that, the interview with the Gorgons and Makoto continued in a smooth manner, and the migration of the girls was clearly decided.

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“That was impressive. I was surprised with Tomoe-sama as well, but to think that Makoto-sama and everyone else was still fine after looking at us”

“And he even said that he would lend us a hand so that our power doesn’t inconvenience us. I feel as if I am in a dream”

“Things that could be worn in our body, at most, it was to wrap a cloth around our hair, but maybe we will be able to wear normal clothes now. Incredible. I am so excited”

Makoto apologized by the fact that they have to put on their blindfolds again, and the two blindfolded Gorgons returned to the standby room that was readied for them and are having a pleasant talk. Even if it’s called a standby room, the furniture is well prepared, and for receiving guests, this room was more than enough.

“Even if our field of vision is shut, our hair helped us grasp our surroundings so we were somehow able to live by, but if it is okay to look, that’s not bad at all. If possible, we want to try enjoying dressing up”

“The battle training also sounds fun. I want to migrate fast～”

“Right. I really want to bring everyone here fast”

The two Gorgons are talking with wide smiles in their faces and having flowers blooming around them ＜Like in shoujo mangas＞. The girls themselves and Makoto haven’t noticed yet but, the migration of those girls will have a small expected problem.

Until now, those girls that were unable to choose the opposite gender by their outward appearance will be migrating to Asora. The girls that didn't care if they were of other races as long as it is male.

The magnificent favor that Makoto brought upon their whole race, just how will they repay him? Free love, mutual concession; the vague things that Makoto told them, as long as it is not misinterpreted, there won't be any problems. There won't be but… if something were to happen, well, Makoto will just be getting his just desserts. It is the fault of Makoto for forgetting that he is also included in the males of Asora.

Gorgon, over two hundred denizens. Pass. Migration after 10 days.

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"Our specialty is gathering nectar!"

"Also, we are able to contact everyone!"

At one side there's Makoto and Ema, and at their front it looked like no one is sitting there.

And in reality, there's two small cushions on top of the table, and there, two small guests are sitting. Accurately speaking, they were: sitting, standing, flying; moving around restlessly.

(Just like how I imagined those kids, no, people. The more I look at them, the more they give me an impression of fairies) (Makoto)

The last interviewees are small fairies. The image that

Makoto has of fairies is: simple-minded, vigorous, and likes pranks. The small crown that is resting on his head looks like the tools used by moms and it is charming. 'It is proof that he is the king so I have to show respect', is what Makoto continues to think, but he can't stop the thoughts of the books he has read before.

"I see. And so, the forest that the fairies were living in has been discovered by a foreign enemy, so you are asking for shelter, is that right?" (Makoto)

"We are not fairies! We are Al-ermera! We are more distinguished than those small insects!"

They say they are al-ermera. Or so to speak, an existence more eminent than that of fairies. But in Makoto's eyes, these guys have exactly the same characteristics as fairies. Because their name is hard to remember, he unintentionally called them fairies.

And in truth, if the fairies they call insects were to line up with them, it is doubtful if Makoto would be able to properly tell the difference.

"We are the interim between fairies and spirits you know! If it's a low grade spirit, we are able to interfere and utilize them!"

Flying all around, diving into the cushion, flying right in front of Makoto while talking; he didn't show a single trace of calming down. Ema seems to be enduring their wild behavior quite a lot. She is trembling bit by bit.

"… Why… did Mio-sama pass this kind of things? In front Makoto-sama, they are…" (Ema)

Ema grumbles. If this were not an audience but a daily conversation, she probably wouldn't get so angry.

"N～ Well, they are numerous but small, so I don't see any problems. And if they are able to get in contact with everyone, that means if something happens, they will be able to tell us immediately. You will be helping out in the explorations right?" (Makoto)

"Leave it to us! We are al-ermeras with courage!"

"Then, prepare, and after the migra-" (Makoto)

"I'm against it Makoto-sama!" (Ema)

"Hia!!"

"Uwa?!"

The courageous al-ermeras hid down the table because of the sudden shout. Makoto was also surprised by the sudden shout at his side, but he didn't really do much and is still sitting in place.

"Such a restless race, this bunch that are practically children, if they were to enter Asora, it would be a disaster! Maybe it's better to just let all their forest get conquered! That way they might reflect!" (Ema)

"E-Ema" (Makoto)

"This is an interview you know?! Moreover, with the race's future at stake! And yet, this… is this how the king of a race should act?!" (Ema)

It seems that Ema's anger reached its peak. Makoto faces

up. Certainly. If he were to compare the previous two races, the attitude of the al-elmeras has many problems. Makoto thought of them as kids and was thinking softly of them, but even if their appearance is small or cute, they are an adult organism, and the one that is asking for the interview is the king. Because Ema was looking at them as a matured race, she showed her anger at the amount of rudeness. And if the king of their race is like this, she thought that the other people of the race would be even worse, so even if she had to oppose Makoto, she still voiced out.
For them who stay in their child-like nature even when they reach maturity, this may be a harsh demand, but Ema couldn't accept it no matter what.

"Calm down Ema. Stoppu!" (Makoto)

"No, I can't Makoto-sama! Makoto-sama is way too soft on this guys! What al-elmeras, what interim between fairies and spirits! In that case, go repel the herd of Riz that are approaching your forest! That's right, it is fine to just come back here again after you are able to do that!" (Ema)

Seeing Ema snap for the first time, Makoto tried to calm her someway by desperately talking to her, and then he called the lizards and ordered them to return the al-elmera representatives to their room. Ema was swinging her arms madly at the fairies that were flying to run away. Truly an unusual scene.

The lizards were also taken aback by the maddened Ema. Even so, they followed the orders of their lord and leave with the small guests that should escape.

“I will stick them into a birdcage and throw them into the forest! Where did you run away you insects?!” (Ema)

“Ema, I understand. They are the ones to blame so, for now, just calm down!!!” (Makoto)

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“What was with that orc?! She doesn’t understand just how strong we are!”

“We are not scared of mere Riz, but if we fight, our comrades will get injured, so we thought that we might as well accept their migration offer!”

“Now that it has come to this, we will drive those Riz back and have that woman apologize!”

“Amazing! King, so intelligent! But what about the migration?”

“This place’s flowers give tasty nectar, so I want to live here more than in that forest! I am the king, so I have to share this nectar with everyone!”

“Then we have to return and prepare for war!”

“Right! We will show Makoto-sama our power!”

Al-elmera, approximately three hundred. On hold.

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That night, Makoto and his followers were sitting together after the meal. While reporting the results of that day’s interviews, they pass the time relaxing.

“Then we will be increasing the number of races by two huh. Regarding the Gorgons, I will discuss with the dwarfs and have them make both glasses and contacts to test” (Shiki)

“So Shiki will be dealing with the Gorgons huh. Then I will be handling the winged people. I should think about a training menu as well. I also have interest in the 4 types of wings and the difference in aptitudes. The thought transmission case has already been solved with the aria that Waka gave us and analyzed after all” (Tomoe)

“I am counting on you two” (Makoto)

“At any rate, Mio, don’t go passing a strange race. Are you listening Mio?!” (Tomoe)

Tomoe and Shiki decide on their own movements as they hear the talk of Makoto. Regarding Mio who is getting scolded by Tomoe, she is approaching Makoto with a small bowl in hand with vegetable sticks of varied colors in it.

“Waka-sama, Waka-sama. Try this out please” (Mio)

“Vegetable stick? Eh, could this be, mayonnaise?! Mio, did you make it yourself?!” (Makoto)

“Yes! I did my best!” (Mio)

“Heh~! Then, I will be trying it out. Yeah, so nostalgic!! And the vegetables here are a lot tastier. This is the best Mio!” (Makoto)

“Ufufufu” (Mio)

Mio was completely delighted, so she didn’t listen to Tomoe, no, the words of Tomoe probably didn’t even enter her ears.

“Hoh～ this is mayonnaise huh. Mio-dono, is it okay for me to taste it too?” (Shiki)

“Waka-sama has already been pleased so, it is okay. Shiki, eat and taste it thoroughly” (Mio)

“Well then. This is… sour, thick, delicious. What a complex taste. It goes well with the vegetables too. Fumu, is there a way to put it in nabe as well…” (Shiki)

Shiki seems to have been captivated by the mayonnaise. The result was quite the high praise.

While continuing to eat the various types, he thinks about a way to utilize it in nabe.

“Hmph, it is certainly delicious, but it can’t be compared to the Miso that will be completed in a near future!” (Tomoe)

“It is because you can’t make Miso that I am here recreating many other things am I not? Please create miso soup fast, Tomoe-san! Soy sauce as well got it?!” (Mio)

“It will be soon-ja, very soon-ja!” Mu, that it is unexpectedly good is so vexing!” (Tomoe)

While saying that, Tomoe is nibbling the carrots and cucumbers. Her favorite seems to be the cucumbers. ‘She

would definitely like Japanese cucumber as well' is what Makoto thought.

"Tomoe, mayonnaise has strong devotees, so don't go saying careless things" (Makoto) <Number 1 mayonnaise devotee>

While nibbling on celery, Makoto laughs as he watches over Tomoe and Mio's interaction.

Obtaining new residents, Asora approaches its second year.